

READERS' Q&A

STEVE RIDER

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

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The man with the mic tackles the MN posers, p20

The Brit has concerns over chassis performance ahead of this Sunday's season-opener

LEWIS: MERC WILL BE ON THE BACK FOOT IN BAHRAIN



The W13 has had its struggles so far

By Matt James

Seven-time F1 World champion Lewis Hamilton has played down his chances of fighting for a win when the new season gets underway in Bahrain this weekend.

Hamilton languished in 16th place on the timesheets after three days of testing at the Middle East track ahead of Sunday's race, although his team-mate George Russell posted the fifth-fastest time. World champion Max Verstappen topped the timesheets for Red Bull.

Both Mercedes suffered with more porpoising problems in Bahrain despite developments to the machine following the opening test runs in Spain.

Hamilton said: "At the moment, I don't think we'll be competing for wins. But there is a potential within our car to get us there. We have just got to be able to extract it and fix some of the problems, which is what we're working on."

"I think we have far bigger challenges this [year] and they are not one-week turnarounds. I think they will take a little bit longer. But from what I'm told we have a considerable amount of pace to find."

Full testing times, p4

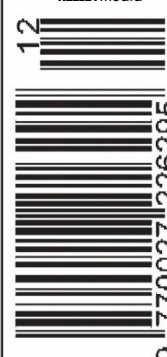


Lewis: fearful

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT
**MOTORSPORT
NEWS**

1982 FORMULA 1 SPECIAL

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LOOK BACK AT GRAND
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COMMENT

Photo: Motorsport Images



Lewis heads Max in testing, but will it be this way around on Sunday afternoon?

GETTING BACK TO THE RACING

While the off-season seems to be shrinking due to F1's habit of racing deep into December, the hunger for this year's Formula 1 battle is higher than ever. The conclusion to 2021 is fresh in the memory and the TV audience has never been higher.

What grand prix racing needs now is a gloves-off season where what happens on the race track is the only arbiter of the result at the end of the year. The rancour of 2021 needs to be firmly put to bed and the sport, not the backbiting, needs to take centre stage.

Lewis Hamilton is urging caution over the pace of his Mercedes, while World champion Max Verstappen says he can push his Red Bull even further despite topping the pre-season testing timesheets in Bahrain last week. Hamilton has been here before, telling the wider world that the Mercedes is likely to struggle and then going on to scoop the opener, so all bets are off.

As well as the top two teams, there are some encouraging noises from Ferrari and McLaren too. The truth will only become apparent on Sunday afternoon but we can only hope that Formula 1 has a season to remember for the right reasons, rather than the reasons that clouded the end of the 2021 battle.

There were clouds hanging over the 1982 season too. It was a year like no other in grand prix racing with no driver winning more than twice over the 16-race schedule. Fan favourite Gilles Villeneuve was killed at Zolder, as was young Osella driver Riccardo Paletti in Canada. Didier Pironi was cut down on the cusp of a title challenge and Keke Rosberg claimed a gutsy crown in a normally aspirated Williams against all the turbocharged machines. Our columnist-at-large David Addison takes a forensic look at the year that packed a decade's drama into just eight months.

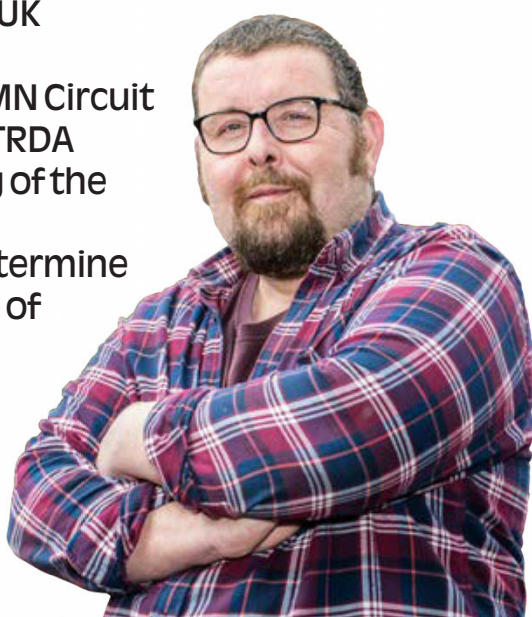
TV sports broadcaster Steve Rider knows all about the dramas that exist in front-line sport. For so long, he has been the face and the voice of motorsport, beaming into people's living rooms every other Sunday to bring its latest instalment. Although he is too humble to admit it, Rider had significant influence to help bring the British Touring Car Championship into the television spotlight in the 1980s, which helped created the UK motorsport juggernaut it has become today.

We have reports from the latest round of the MN Circuit Rally Championship from Donington Park, the BTRDA curtain-raiser and the first national race meeting of the year at Silverstone.

Also don't forget to help Motorsport News determine its favourite rally car. The shortlist and the details of how to make your voice heard are on page 34.

Matt James

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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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World champion promises more speed in Bahrain this weekend



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We reflect on grand prix racing's most turbulent campaign ever



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The man who has fronted a thousand broadcasts tackles the readers posers

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Get involved! MN Poll: Favourite rally machinery

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RACING NEWS



World champion Max (right) said there was more speed from the RB18



Verstappen ran through his scheduled programme

VERSTAPPEN PROMISES MORE PACE TO COME FROM RED BULL

Champion confident after making strides with car in Bahrain testing

By Matt James

World champion Max Verstappen said he has yet to unlock the full pace from his new Red Bull RB18 despite topping the times in the three-day test in Bahrain ahead of this weekend’s season-opening grand prix. The Dutchman’s

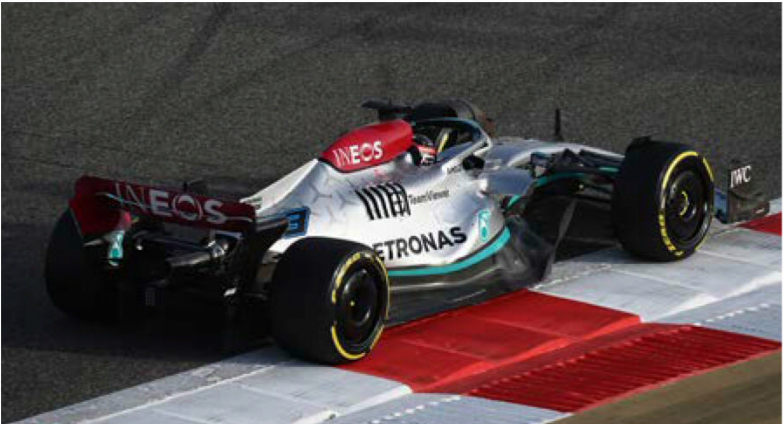
1m31.720s lap, set on the final day of running, put him top of the pile ahead of Haas driver Mick Schumacher, whose team was granted extra running after missing some mileage due to a freight delay. Verstappen said he had been buoyed by the pace of the car and the progress made since the opening test sessions of

the season in Spain three weeks ago. He said that the team had assessed all the different tyre options ahead of Sunday’s grand prix as the whole field gets used to the new 18-inch Pirelli rubber. “Nobody is in full-beans qualifying spec at the moment,” said Verstappen. “I think the main focus was about the tyres that we’re

going to use next week [for Round 1]. The car was feeling alright, and we went through our programme we planned to do, and that’s always positive. “The car is better in low fuel, and naturally on high fuel the car is a bit lazy and it doesn’t really do a lot. But it’s the same for everyone. I think the new parts which were on [for the test sessions],

they also worked well, which you always hope for.” While Verstappen was happy, there were concerns for Mercedes with the car suffering porpoising. George Russell’s best time in the W13 was one second shy of Verstappen’s benchmark, while Lewis Hamilton was languishing down in 16th position.

TESTING TIMES			
Bahrain			
March 10-12			
POS	DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	1m31.720s (Sat)
2	Mick Schumacher	Haas	1m32.241s (Sat)
3	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	1m32.415s (Sat)
4	Fernando Alonso	Alpine	1m32.698s (Sat)
5	George Russell	Mercedes	1m32.759s (Sat)
6	Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	1m32.985s (Sat)
7	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri	1m33.002s (Sat)
8	Sergio Perez	Red Bull	1m33.105s (Sat)
9	Lando Norris	McLaren	1m33.191s (Sat)
10	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	1m33.207s (Fri)
11	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	1m33.532s (Fri)
12	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin	1m33.821s (Sat)
13	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	1m33.902s (Thu)
14	Guanyu Zhou	Alfa Romeo	1m33.959s (Sat)
15	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	1m34.064s (Fri)
16	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1m34.141s (Fri)
17	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	1m34.276s (Fri)
18	Alex Albon	Williams	1m35.070s (Thu)
19	Nicolas Latifi	Williams	1m35.634s (Sat)
20	Pietro Fittipaldi	Haas	1m37.422s (Thu)



The new sidepods of the W13 caused some uproar

MERC BOSSES FIRM ON NEW SIDEPOD DESIGN

Mercedes has defended the radical sidepods on its new Formula 1 car that were was revealed in testing in Bahrain last week. The compact and tightly packaged sidepods were a new addition to the W13 chassis during the second testing sessions, and team boss Toto Wolff said the initiative was cleared by

officials. Wolff said: “The process is very clear, when you go in a specific development direction with your team, having the FIA as part of scrutinising it, you’re exchanging CAD data and making them part of the process.” However, F1 managing director Ross Brawn said the design was something the rule

makers hadn’t accounted for when drawing up the new regulations. “I think there’s no doubt that the Mercedes concept we didn’t anticipate, it’s an extreme interpretation of the regulations,” he said. “And I think inevitably, there’s going to be a lot of debate about their interpretation. That’s what happens with new regulations.”

ASTON MARTIN CONSIDERS BESPOKE F1 POWER UNIT

Aston Martin will look into developing its own powerplant to coincide with new rules coming into grand prix racing in 2026. Team principal Mike Krack said that the Silverstone-based operation, which will field Mercedes-powered cars for Lance Stroll and Sebastian Vettel this season, would look to see if its own branded

powerplant was feasible. Krack said: “We have a new set of regulations coming for 2026. With more emphasis, obviously, on electric power than today. I think it’s normal for brands like Aston Martin that if there are new power unit regulations that you have a look into them, that you carefully investigate if this is strategically the right thing.

“I think it is the right step that F1 is taking, to have a higher hybrid bias, or higher bias over electric power.” Krack said that to get the infrastructure in place to make the move in time for 2026, a final decision would have to be made within the forthcoming months. Aston Martin is in the process of creating a brand-new factory.



Aston Martin could get its own engine for 2026



Magnussen has cleared his diary for F1

MAGNUSSEN STEPS INTO HAAS F1 DRIVE

Dane Kevin Magnussen has been drafted into the Haas F1 team to replace expelled Russian driver Nikita Mazepin for the 2022 season. The 29-year-old, who raced for the American-owned team from 2016 through to 2020, was contesting the IndyCar series in the USA and was due to be part of Peugeot’s forthcoming sportscar squad. He has been released from those commitments and will now line up alongside Mick Schumacher in the VF-22. Magnussen took part in the test running in Bahrain last week.

The Dane said: “I was obviously very surprised but equally very excited to receive the call from Haas F1 Team. I was looking in a different direction regarding my commitments for 2022 but the opportunity to return to compete in Formula 1, and with a team I know extremely well, was simply too appealing.” Team boss Gunther Steiner added: “I’m delighted to welcome Kevin Magnussen back to Haas F1 Team. When looking for a driver who could bring value to the team, not to mention a wealth of Formula 1 experience, Kevin was a straightforward decision for us.”

BAN ON FORMULA 1 BEING SHOWN IN RUSSIA

Formula 1 will not be shown in Russia due to the country’s invasion of Ukraine. The free-to-air coverage will be terminated on the Match TV Channel and F1 TV will no longer be made available. Match’s executive producer Aleksandr Taschin said: “The Match TV channel was informed of the termination of our agreement to broadcast F1. Unfortunately, the 2022 season will not be shown on

our channel, despite the fulfilment of all the financial and marketing obligations from our side.” Excluded F1 driver Nikita Mazepin and his father Dmitry have been added to the list of sanctioned people by the European Union. Nikita Mazepin, who has set up a foundation for athletes unable to compete for political reasons, says he is keeping his legal options open after his contract with Haas was ripped up.

FRESH DEAL KEEPS F1 AT IMOLA UNTIL 2025



Imola has a new deal

Formula 1 bosses have tied up a deal with Imola circuit to host the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix through until the end of 2025. The track, which first hosted a grand prix in 1980, was a constant on the grand prix schedule from 1981 through to 2006. It returned to the F1 line-up during the Covid pandemic-hit season in 2020. Stefano Domenicali, president of Formula 1, said: “I am delighted that we will be continuing our excellent

partnership with Imola for the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix until 2025. “The circuit is iconic and has been part of the history of our sport and they have done an incredible job of hosting two races during the pandemic. It is a proud moment for our Italian fans to host two races and for all our fans around the world to see this fantastic circuit on the calendar for the future.” This year’s Emilia Romagna GP is due to take place April 24.



Hildebrand: Five-race deal

HILDEBRAND JOINS FOYT FOR INDY OVALS ASSAULT

Former Indy 500 runner-up JR Hildebrand will rejoin the AJ Foyt Enterprises IndyCar team for five oval rounds of the championship in 2022 including the blue-riband race in May.

Hildebrand will partner Kyle Kirkwood and Dalton Kellet at the Indy 500 and will also take part in the races at Texas Motor Speedway this weekend, the double header at Iowa Speedway in July and the Gateway race in late August.

Hildebrand, who finished 15th in the Indy 500 with AJ Foyt Enterprises last year, will drive the car that is being used on the street and road courses by Tatiana Calderon, who is in her first season in the American single-seater contest.

Hildebrand, 34, said: "Although the results may not have looked special on paper, I was really impressed by what we accomplished last year at the 500 and look forward to attacking these other ovals on the IndyCar schedule alongside Kyle and Dalton."

HYUNDAI ENGINE PLAN FOR EXCELR8'S BTCC CAMPAIGN

The Excelr8 British Touring Car Championship team will switch to using a bespoke Hyundai engine for its i30 N models in the 2022 competition.

The squad conducted a feasibility study along with Swindon Powertrain to gauge the viability of the fresh powerplants for its cars, which will be driven by Tom Chilton and Tom Ingram alongside the two other sister machines. The programme was given the green light and the team has already tested with the two-litre turbocharged unit. The team previously used the TOCA BTCC motor.

Team boss Justina Williams said: "A huge amount of work has gone in behind the scenes in recent months to get to this stage, and to see the new engine run without issues straight out of the box is credit to everyone involved. The decision to push ahead with a project such as this is a major indication of our drive to reach the pinnacle of the British Touring Car Championship."

Swindon chief Raphael Caille added: "After the development work that has been ongoing in recent months, the first test on track was a key milestone for the Hyundai engine programme. The engineers at Excelr8 have done a superb job in integrating the new engine into the car as there were no issues at all and from our perspective, the test went exceptionally well."

THOMPSON RETURNS FOR TEAM HARD BTCC ATTACK

Essex racer keen to get his career momentum back in 2022 campaign

Photo: Mototspport Images, Jakob Ebrej

Thompson has eyes on big results



By Matt James

British Touring Car Championship returnee Bobby Thompson says he is more motivated than ever after securing his return to the series with Team Hard.

The 2017 VW Racing Cup title winner, 25, joined the BTCC in 2018 in a Team Hard VW CC, which he raced for two seasons before linking up with Trade Price Cars Racing in 2020 to handle an Audi S3. However, a huge crash in the third race at Croft ruled him out for the final two meetings of the season.

He will handle Team Hard's Cupra R, which was introduced into the BTCC in 2021. Thompson has already tested the car at Brands Hatch.

"It's really good to be back in the BTCC with the team I started my

journey with," said Thompson.

"I've come a long way since I was last with Team Hard, and I can already see the team is clearly putting in a massive effort to get these cars ready to be fighting at the front for the upcoming season.

"It's always tough to miss out on a season, as I did after my crash at Croft in 2020 which put me out for the remainder of the campaign. I wanted to get back last year, but unfortunately it wasn't meant to be. I took that time, however, to reflect upon my racing career and it only made me more motivated than ever to get back to the front."

● Jack Butel will also return to the BTCC this season remaining with the Excelr8 Motorsport team. The 25-year-old will handle one of the squad's Hyundai i30 N machines. Butel was fourth in the race for the Jack Sears Trophy accolade last year.

FIVE TOP-CLASS CARS HEAD THE LE MANS ENTRY

The organisers of the Le Mans 24 Hours have revealed the entry list for June's race and it includes five cars in the blue-riband Hypercar division.

Toyota will enter two GR010 Hybrid cars. One will be for 2021 winners Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez. The sister car

will be handled by Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa.

The Alpine Elf Matmut team will run a machine for Andre Negrao, Matthieu Vaxiviere and Nicolas Lapierre. The remaining two top-flight entries are from Glickenhaus Racing with its 007 LMH

model. One will be driven by Olivier Pla, Romain Dumas and Pipo Derani and the other will be crewed by Ryan Briscoe, Richard Westbrook and Franck Mailleux.

There will be 27 cars in the LMP2 class, and seven in GTE Pro. The GTE Am division features 23 entries.



Toyota's crew of Kobayashi, Conway and Lopez gun for victory



Conway is after another crown

WORLD ENDURANCE GOES FOSSIL-FREE FOR 2022

The FIA WEC starts its 10th season with the 1000 Miles of Sebring this Friday with a pledge to cut its cars' emissions by 65% by introducing a new fossil-free fuel for all competitors.

The new biofuel, produced by Total, has been produced using waste material from the wine-making industry in France.

All competitors must use the new fuel at each of the six rounds currently scheduled, including the Le Mans 24 Hours where 280,000 litres will be needed to support the 62 entries.

WEC CEO Frederic Lequien said: "Innovation and efficiency have been the watchwords of endurance racing.

We are extremely proud that our partnership... has inspired a fuel as that is as innovative, powerful and exciting as the cars that will race in the season ahead."

In the Hypercar class, Toyota's reigning champion Mike Conway returns alongside Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez to defend their shared crown.

OBITUARY

Vic Elford: 1935-2022

Sportscar legend Vic Elford passed away earlier this week aged 86.

Elford initially made his name in rallying, and won the 1967 European Rally Championship, before joining Porsche to become a stalwart for the German marque and synonymous with its iconic 917 sportscar.

In an astonishing period of success in early 1968, Elford won the Monte Carlo Rally then a week later won the Daytona 24 Hours in a Porsche 907 LH. In this period he also took a fine fourth place on his Formula 1 World championship debut in a Cooper-BRM at Rouen. His

single-seater career – which included 13 F1 starts – never took off though and Elford instead become known as one of the world's leading sportscar drivers.

Le Mans 24 Hours victory somehow eluded Elford, though he came close to winning against the odds in 1969 on the 917's first La Sarthe appearance, and – via a close relationship with Porsche motorsport boss Ferdinand Piech – was at the cutting edge of the 917's development.

Ultimate motorsport all-rounder Elford also won the first rallycross event in 1967 plus raced in the Daytona 500.



Legend Elford passes away

RACING NEWS

BRITISH GT STARS IN EURO ASSAULT

Twice British GT champion Andrew Howard will return to European competition this year leading a two-car GT World Challenge Europe assault with his Beechdean AMR team.

Beechdean will race a pair of Aston Martin Vantage GT3s, and Howard – who also won 2016’s European Le Mans Series LMGTE title – is the first confirmed driver.

Howard alongside Jonny Adam raced a Beechdean Vantage in British GT last year but lost title momentum after Howard had a late-season Oulton Park qualifying crash, necessitating a switch to a spare car.

Howard said: “It’s fantastic to be able to announce our return to international motorsport in the GT World Challenge Europe. It’s the first time we’ll have run a pair of GT3 cars internationally and we’re certainly aiming to be competitive from the get-go.”

British GT race-winner Jordan Witt meanwhile returns to GTWCE with Lamborghini squad Leipter Motorsport, bidding for the Silver Cup alongside Brendon Leitch and Dennis Fetzner. Witt finished fourth in 2019’s GTWCE Silver standings in a Barwell Huracan.



Howard: European run



White joins Smalley in famous colours



White’s FF1600 honours include 2020’s Walter Hayes

WALTER HAYES WINNER WHITE GETS CARRERA CUP GB REDLINE CHANCE

FF1600 star gets a surprise BTCC-support seat with title-winning Redline in Duckhams colours

By Graham Keilloh

Long-time Formula Ford 1600 frontrunner and Walter Hayes Trophy winner Oli White will race in Carrera Cup GB this year with Redline Racing in iconic yellow-and-blue Duckhams colours.

White joins new Porsche GB

junior Adam Smalley in Duckhams-sponsored Redline Porsches this year. British Touring Car star Dan Cammish claimed his three Carrera Cup GB crowns with Redline, including his title won last year when he returned to the category for a season and also raced in a Duckhams livery.

White in recent years has been a

regular victory contender in top-level Formula Ford events including the blue-riband Festival and Walter Hayes and has taken several FF1600 titles including winning 2020’s Hayes and several Champion of Brands crowns. The 29-year-old also took part in America’s prestigious Road to Indy shootouts in 2016 and ’17, coming a close second

to Oliver Askew in the former, and has scored a hat-trick of wins at Bathurst’s Mount Panorama.

White said: “Chris Hodgen [Duckhams programme manager] gave me the opportunity to test one of Redline’s 991.2-style GT3 Cup cars at the Porsche Taster Day at the end of last season and it seemed to go really well. Simon

Leonard [Redline Racing team owner] then invited me out to Portimao to have a full day in the car over the winter to really test me out.”

Hodgen added: “Oliver was actually the inspiration behind looking to increase our involvement to two cars this season. [He is] blisteringly quick and a great guy to boot.”

BURNS BACK FOR BRITISH GT4 TITLE DEFENCE WITH CENTURY

Will Burns will return to defend his GT4 title in British GT this year with Century Motorsport alongside a new driving partner in fellow race-winner Jack Brown.

With Century Burns took a dominant 2021 crown alongside Gus Burton. Brown in British GT last year raced a Balfe McLaren GT4 alongside

Ashley Marshall and won the Spa round.

Chris Salkeld also returns to Century’s British GT line-up in its second M4 GT4, and the team is in talks with potential Salkeld partners and wants to hear from bronze and silver-graded drivers. Last year Salkeld competed with Andrew Gordon-Colebrook.

Salkeld’s partner, as well as Century’s British GT3 plans, will be revealed in the coming weeks.

Burns said: “It will be hard to top last year’s success, and there’s a reason why no-one’s ever won two [British GT4 titles] in a row, but I wouldn’t be doing this if I didn’t think we had a good chance.”



Burns (l) wants back-to-back titles with new partner



Orton gets brand-new Porsche

ORTON JOINS HOPKIN IN REVAMPED TEAM PARKER BRITISH GT4 EFFORT

Porsche Carrera Cup GB racer Jamie Orton will join 16-year-old Seb Hopkins in Team Parker Racing’s British GT line-up in GT4 this season in the team’s brand-new Porsche 718 Cayman.

Hopkins was announced as one half of Team Parker’s new GT4 entry late last year and is set at British GT’s Oulton Park

season opener next month to become one the youngest drivers in championship history. Hopkins has told Motorsport News that this year’s GT4 title is his aim.

Orton, 42, finished third in Carrera Cup’s Pro-Am class in 2018, before moving up to the frontrunning Pro category the following season. He finished

eighth in 2021’s standings. He also won the 2011 Caterham Superlight championship and finished third in Ginetta GT4 Supercup’s 2015 table.

Both drivers will be racing with a co-driver for the first time and have started their pre-season testing, including running in Portugal last month.

Orton said: “After four

seasons in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB, it was time for a new challenge, and racing in the British GT championship will be just that. [Sharing the car] will be a challenge, and with the variety of race lengths it’s going to be interesting to see how we get on. I’ve been a Porsche fan for a long time so it’s great to be able to stay with the brand.”

MG CUP CHAMP WILLIAMS MAKES METRO MOVE

Reigning MG Cup champion Mike Williams has returned to the MG Car Club’s Metro Cup this year after an MG Cup regulation change made his Rover Metro ineligible.

Williams won the MG Metro Cup championship in 2017 and switched to MG Cup in 2018.

MGCC’s season starts this Sunday at Brands Hatch.

Williams told Motorsport News: “[The reg change] would have forced me to drop down to Class B, so I’m not interested in running in the midfield.

“I’ve got an old engine sat around and gearbox that I built

in 2015. I thought I’ll throw that in knowing it’s not going to be as competitive as if I spent £2000 or whatever doing a new one, but it might throw me back into the crowd a bit. If you get out in front it’s not as much fun as fighting for a position. My plan this year is to have some battling fun.

“There’s some good cars in the Metro Cup. Mark Eales, and Dick Trevett’s back in it this year. Dick’s probably the favourite.

“I don’t want the pressure of being at the top [this year]. If I’m battling for second, third and fourth, that’s where the fun is.”



Reg change means Williams will race other Metros in ’22

RACING NEWS

FF1600 STAR WALKER WANTS GB4 TITLE AFTER SEALING SWITCH

Promising teenager is aiming high after confirming his GB4 graduation with Elite Motorsport

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Walker wants inaugural title to get a GB3 move

By Graham Keilloh

National Formula Ford 1600 pacesetter Alex Walker has his eyes on the inaugural GB4 title after confirming his seat in the junior single-seater championship with Elite Motorsport.

The 18-year-old led the National FF1600 table for much of last season, but missed the title controversially after two collisions with Team Dolan rivals during the final meeting where scores cannot be dropped. BRDC Rising Star Walker also made the final 2022-23 Porsche GB Junior shootout quartet, and sampled British Formula 4 in 2019.

Walker said: "I hope to win the GB4 title, as it's my aim is to race in GB3 and therefore this is the perfect stepping stone."

"I've known Eddie [Ives, team boss] since my first steps into car racing via the Ginetta Scholarship a few years ago. The team has a history of producing winners."

"From the limited testing I've done in a GB4 car, it feels different but also similar at times compared to the other single-



Walker feels he can bring his FF1600 and F4 experience to GB4 car

seaters I've raced. FF1600s are tricky to balance on their skinny tyres, with little grip, and at times the GB4 car needs to be managed in the same way. The Mygale British F4 car required a smooth and a good braking technique which again can be carried across to the GB4. That said, I

still have lots to learn but so far so good."

Ives added: "I've been very impressed with his speed and attitude."

Swedish driver Elias Adestam meanwhile has been confirmed as GB4's first overseas driver after the 15-year-old confirmed a Fortec Motorsport seat.

GRAY ADDS TO BRITISH F4'S F1 HOPEFULS

British teenage talent Oliver Gray has become a member of the Williams Racing Driver Academy and will switch to Carlin for his second British Formula 4 season.

The 16-year-old with Fortec finished seventh in 2021's British F4 standings, bagging two wins, and now joins the team that's taken four British F4 drivers' titles in the six seasons it has competed.

It also means three 2022 British F4 drivers are with Formula 1 junior programmes; Gray's Carlin team-mate Ugo Ugochukwu is with McLaren and Argenti's Daniel Guinchard with Mercedes.

Gray said: "Williams is a team with

so much history and success in Formula 1 and I hope to one day be able to add to that. As I begin working with the team, my immediate goals are to develop as a driver both on and off the track, as well as focus on my 2022 season.

"Winter testing has gone well so far, and the new car is amazing to drive. To come into the season with the support of Williams Racing is just a dream come true and I'm hugely thankful for their belief in me."

South Korean Michael Shin meanwhile has become British F4's 11th confirmed 2022 driver after sealing a Virtuosi Racing seat.



Gray got double good news with Williams and Carlin chances



Pulling (right) was snapped up by new Alpine programme

PULLING JOINS ALPINE JUNIOR PROGRAMME

British Formula 4 and W Series racer Abbi Pulling is one of five drivers signed up to the new Alpine Affiliates young driver programme.

The 18-year-old finished sixth in 2020's British F4 standings, though her sophomore 2021 British F4 campaign was frustrating and she quit mid-season amid budget issues.

She nevertheless impressed in four W Series races last year, taking a pole and second-place finish at Austin.

Alpine Affiliates aims to support and nurture promising young racing drivers and be a potential feeder for the main Alpine Academy. Members will also have the chance to use the Formula 1 team's Enstone facilities.

FESTIVAL WINNER SHARP LEADS BM 2022 ATTACK

The 2021 Formula Ford Festival winner Jamie Sharp is set to lead a strong multiple-driver BM Racing line-up in the National Formula Ford 1600 championship this year.

Sharp with BM Racing won the landmark and star-studded 50th Festival late last year in a dramatic final, having only won one FF1600 race before the weekend. He finished fifth in 2021's National FF1600 standings. The 20-year-old has been a FF1600 regular since 2019 having raced in British Formula 4 in 2017 and '18.

The team said on Facebook: "We are very much looking forward to working with Jamie again and continuing where we left off. His development has been an absolute joy to be a part of."

Sharp will be joined at the team for selected outings by his predecessor Festival winner Rory Smith, who won 2020's Festival also with BM. This year Smith will complete selected National FF1600 rounds as well as continue racing his Ralt RT4 Formula Atlantic car in Historic Sports Car Club events.

Experienced Dave McArthur will race for the team at National FF1600's season-opening Silverstone round as well as in other selected events including the Walter Hayes Trophy, while Italian Davide Meloni returns to the team for the National championship, having not competed with the squad since 2019 due to Covid restrictions.

INQUEST RULES BRANDS MARSHAL'S DEATH AN ACCIDENT

A coroner's inquest last week ruled the death of marshal Robert Foote at Brands Hatch last year as an accident.

The 67-year-old former mayor on July 31 was stationed at marshals' post two on Brands' Brabham Straight during a British Automobile Racing Club meeting. In the Pre-93 and Pre-03 Touring Car race, Simon Beament's Ford Escort RS2000 was sent into the barrier on the outside after contact

with another car then barrel rolled into the marshal's post. Beament sustained a broken leg.

Having considered the evidence at the inquest, assistant coroner Roger Hatch concluded that Foote's death was "caused by an accident".

Motorsport UK safety executive Daniel Carter carried out an inspection of the track days after the incident and found the barriers were fixed by timber

oak posts. Guidelines were introduced in 2019 that all new circuits' barriers should be mounted to steel posts.

Brands, for the last 10 years in a rolling programme, has been installing metal posts where timber posts needed to be replaced. However, steel posts are also required in areas presenting a "higher risk" and it was said to have been "unusual" for this type of crash to occur at that marshals' post.



Marshals paid Foote tribute



Festival winner is back for more



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RALLY NEWS

ERC'S NEW LIVE FORMAT PRAISED
AS SOLANS WINS FAFE ROUND

Drivers impressed by new service following rain-hit European curtain-raiser

Photos: mckleinimagedatabase.com



Solans took the first win of new ERC era

By Graham Lister

Leading drivers have hailed the European Rally Championship's new era, which began in northern Portugal last weekend. It was the first event held since WRC Promoter took over the promotional rights to the series and resulted in all stages being streamed live on the WRC+ platform. Although the streaming service had

gone off-air when Ken Torn, who was running 19th on the road, came through to win the event-deciding powerstage, the coverage was widely praised. "It's really good when you have all the stages live, good for the fans and the sponsors," said pre-event favourite Efrén Llarena. Erik Cais, a WRC2 podium finisher, added: "We could watch the onboard of the guys who are on the stages because I

want to know the conditions on the second loop and how it's going for them." Both Cais and Llarena were among a number of top drivers who hit trouble on the rain-hit opening leg, which eventual winner Nil Solans completed with a comfortable lead following a faultless display by the Spaniard. Solans, who scored WRC points on his World Rally Car debut on Rally Spain last season, remained in front through

MARTI STOPS THE CHAMPAGNE

Marc Marti made a personal request to the Fafe organisers not to present champagne to the winning crews at the podium finish on Sunday afternoon. The veteran co-driver and a three-time World Rally Championship winner partnered Nil Solans to victory on the European championship opener but was keen not to overdo the celebrations as a mark of the respect to the people of Ukraine. "It's a terrible situation and this was the right thing to do," said Marti. Several cars carried Ukraine flags during the event while messages calling for an end to the Russian invasion also appeared on cars.

Sunday's closing leg in his Volkswagen Polo to beat multiple Portuguese champion Armindo Araújo (Skoda Fabia) and Estonian Georg Linnamae, who was co-driven by Welshman James Morgan. "It's been a very interesting event, the stages are very good, the weather has made it challenging for the crews and the organisers," Morgan said. "The championship looks good for the future."



Wheatley: focus on lower levels
BRITON ANDREW WHEATLEY GETS TOP FIA RALLY JOB

Newly-appointed FIA rally department boss Andrew Wheatley is already working on plans to make rallying more sustainable at sub-World championship level. Briton Wheatley was promoted from his WRC manager role within the governing body to rally director replacing Yves Matton, who departed in December. Wheatley, a Matton recruit from M-Sport where he had worked for 20 years, has been tasked with "setting out the strategic vision of the rally department in line with the guidelines provided by the relevant commissions and oversee the development and administrative management of the rally department", according to an FIA statement. He will report to Peter Bayer, the FIA's general secretary for sport having been interviewed for the job by 2001 World champion co-driver and FIA deputy president for sport Robert Reid. "We have ushered in a great deal of technological change in the past 12 months across the rally spectrum including the introduction of hybrid powertrains and fossil-free fuels at the highest levels," Wheatley said. "Our task is to consolidate this and bring that same level of focus to strengthen the base of the rally pyramid to ensure that we safeguard the future of the sport. "The future of automotive technology is evolving so quickly we must ensure we keep pace with that change for the benefit of all of stakeholders, engage member clubs through a regional focus and help to develop the stars of tomorrow." The FIA has yet to announce who will replace Wheatley as WRC manager.



NO SPA BREAK FOR YPRES RALLY

There will be no away day at Spa-Francorchamps when the Ypres Rally returns to the World championship schedule this August. Motorsport News included details of Belgian media reports in its February 17 issue suggesting the track, which hosted the final leg of the first WRC-counting Ypres Rally last August, was unavailable one week ahead of the Belgian Grand Prix. Instead Ypres, the replacement for Rally Northern Ireland, will be based entirely within the Westhoek area of Flanders in the northwest of the country with the iconic Kemmelberg, essentially a hillclimb on cobblestones, hosting the deciding powerstage on Sunday August 21. With no trip to Wallonia in the southeast for the closing leg, organisers have cut out a liaison section of some 190

miles with around 40% of the new compact route featuring competitive action. The event begins with the traditional ceremonial start in Ypres' market square on the afternoon of Thursday August 18, with shakedown following at 1600hrs local time. Friday's leg consists of two loops of four stages, including Langemark and Westouter, which crosses the French border at one point. Legendary stages such as Dikkebus and Hollebeke are among four repeated stages on Saturday August 20, while two runs through Watou and Kemmelberg form Sunday's itinerary. Event boss Alain Penasse said: 'It was not only the long liaison to Spa that played a role in this decision to stay in Ypres, it was practically impossible to finish [at Spa] as the preparations for the grand prix will have already started.'

RALLY FINLAND BOSSES MAKE ROUTE CHANGES

Rally Finland's return to its traditional August date and a four-day format will use a heavily revised route, event bosses have confirmed. Approximately half of the timed distance will be new for 2022 in comparison to last year, while Saturday's leg will feature 93 miles out of the event's total of 201.43 miles. Of the total distance, it's estimated that 10% is on roads previously unused by the event. Among the changes to the itinerary is a heavily revised Harju, the part-street, part-parkland stage in host city Jyväskylä. Rannankyla hosts the

shakedown for the first time since 2010, while the 13-mile double-use Lankamaa stage on the first leg on Friday August 6 is the rally's longest. Among the expected highlights on Saturday is the Rapsula stage, which includes a section of the famous Ouninpohja. Oittila, where Ari Vatanen crashed out on the 1975 Rally Finland, and the jump-heavy Ruuhimäki, make up the final day with the second Ruuhimäki run counting as the powerstage. After running in October 2021 due to Covid restrictions, this year's event is scheduled from August 4-7.



While Rally Finland reverts to its usual date, half the route is new

RALLY NEWS

PUNDIT COTTON RETURNS TO RALLYING

Rally commentator Matt Cotton returned to the driving seat for the first time in three years at last weekend's Malcolm Wilson Rally.

The Cornishman helmed a Peugeot 208R2, formerly used by Josh Cornwell to contest the Junior British Rally Championship. Cotton previously competed in both the BRC and BTRDA 1400 Championships but his last major outing was at the 2015 Wales Rally GB in a Ford Fiesta R2. Work commitments have since prevented all but a one-off outing at the 2019 Grizedale Rally.

"I have always wanted to have another go at driving," he reported. "The 208R2 is a very good car; it sounds right, and it is easy to adjust the set-up for gravel or asphalt. It will give us options on which future events we choose to do."

Cotton says he does not intend to contest a whole championship. He said: "We have work commitments at many of the rallies that I would also like to drive in, but we are putting a set of events together that we can do. Ideally, we will do fewer, but bigger rallies."

PRITCHARD SIGNS UP FOR BRC WITH POLO R5

Jason Pritchard will embark on his first British Rally Championship campaign since 2011, piloting a Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 from Melvyn Evans Motorsport.

Pritchard, both a triple Asphalt and British Historic champion, has never rallied an R5 car but will get his first taste of the Polo on this weekend's North West Stages as testing for Rally Tendring & Clacton, the first round of the BRC.

"I'll be honest, this year we planned just to pick events I wanted to do because we'd done the championships there's nothing else to do, and we didn't have the budget to do the BRC so it never even crossed my mind," Pritchard told MN. "It was literally the end of last year we were approached by some companies and it's not every day someone offers to support you with this, so you have to do it. I'm sure the pace will be quick whoever's there, it'll be good. We're looking forward to it."

Despite not competing in the BRC since he crashed out of the 2011 Jim Clark Rally in a Subaru Impreza N16, Pritchard is sure he can fight for the title at his first attempt.

"Anyone that tells you they turn up and do a championship and does a rally just going there, especially at that level, you don't," he said. "When there's much investment involved you're there [to win]."

"Everyone goes to a rally to do their best, some events you've got to push your time to push to get the result, other times you think I'll just hang back and get some points as that's what gets you championships, but we're going there to do our best and what happens, happens."

INGRAM RELISHING NORTH WEST STAGES CHANCE

British ace makes rare UK appearance and with new co-driver Drew

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

By Luke Barry

Chris Ingram has described the opportunity to compete on his home event as "a dream come true" as he leads the entry for this weekend's North West Stages.

The 2019 European championship winner, competing in WRC2 with Toksport this year, is using the event as a good test ahead of the next WRC round in Croatia. It will also mark the first competitive outing for new co-driver Craig Drew following Ingram's split with Ross Whittock last month.

"It's been nine years since I've done a rally in England which is insane, it was the Sunseeker 2013," the Mancunian battler told MN. "These are my most local stages which is awesome, and to be doing it with my team and my car just makes it even better."

Ingram's Fabia has winning pedigree as it is the car which WRC2 team-mate Andreas Mikkelsen took to victory in both Monte Carlo and Sweden this season. The last time that Ingram carried number one on an event, he won the European Rally Championship title. This time, he is relishing the chance to compete for fun.

"Every rally I've done has been under so much pressure and this is just like a dream come true to do your local rally," he said. "It's weird seeing... when they announced I was doing the rally there were so many comments saying 'that's amazing' but actually the last time I was doing an English rally I was just a young kid that dreamt of [doing] this."



Ingram will return to the UK

SEEDDED ENTRY LIST		
North West Stages		
POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Chris Ingram/Craig Drew	Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo
2	Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke	VW Polo GTI R5
3	Neil Simpson/Michael Gibson	Skoda Fabia Rally2 evo
4	David Henderson/Chris Lees	Ford Fiesta R5
5	Frank Bird/Jack Morton	Ford Fiesta Rally2
6	Mark Kelly/Neil Colman	Ford Fiesta R5
7	Neil Roskill/Andrew Roughead	Ford Fiesta R5
8	John Stone/Tom Woodburn	VW Polo GTI R5
9	Stephen Simpson/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta R5
10	Simon Bowen/Richard Robinson	Ford Fiesta S2000T



Binnie was delighted with his speed on the opening SRC encounter

BINNIE SURPRISED TO WIN SNOWMAN RALLY

Michael Binnie says he was surprised to win a second Snowman Rally in succession after driving within himself on the Scottish Rally Championship season-opener earlier this month.

The event victor, driving a Mitsubishi Lancer E9, finished 19 seconds clear of champion Jock Armstrong.

"It was pretty awesome, we were pretty buzzing," Binnie said of his win. "I felt like I was driving well within myself, we were just driving really smoothly and I don't know it just seemed to work really well. They're just amazing stages, they're very fast and flowing, you can keep your momentum up and I think that really helps with an Evo and with me as well, I like to be driving the socks off the thing."

Binnie heads to the Speyside Stages next month with high hopes of building on his opening salvo: "It's obviously very early days as you know, but obviously we're in the best position. It's a long, long championship so we'll just have to see."

DAVIES MAKES BRC SWITCH FOR R5 DEBUT

Irish rallying class champion Andy Davies will mount a full British Rally Championship campaign in a first-generation Ford Fiesta R5.

Davies told MN: "I did always intend to go back to Ireland I'll be honest with you, but I don't want to say the British Rally Championship was a second option because it wasn't. When the calendar came out there was so much that fits. It's a cost-effective championship in my eyes. For me it's an easy option.

"The coverage is great, that swings me as well. Matt [Cotton] and Bex [Hinton on the media team] they do a great job and if you're looking for exposure or looking to attract sponsors and things, the BRC does it very, very well and I don't think anybody can deny that."

Davies is yet to drive the car but has two tests planned before the first round as well as an entry onto the SMC Stages at Anglesey on April 10. He'll be co-driven by Rob Fagg who replaces Michael Gilbey.

"It pains him [Gilbey] not to be in this seat because we won the Welsh championship together, we won the Irish championship together and

we always said we'd do this and it's a shame that we can't, but logistically he's just had a promotion and runs the logistics for the [Hyundai] World Rally team so it's a big job," Davies explained.

"Rob obviously brings a wealth of experience. I need somebody who can drive the car from that side of the car so it was a no-brainer for me when he offered."



Davies will get behind the wheel of a Fiesta

GREER UNDER PRESSURE IN WEST CORK

Northern Ireland Rally champion Jonathan Greer admits hitting the ground running in West Cork this weekend will be imperative if he is to stay in touch with the leading R5 and Rally2 drivers.

Greer makes his return to the Irish Tarmac Championship on round two of the series with Dai Roberts, the pair tackling the Clonakilty-based event in a new Citroen C3 Rally2 supermini.

The Carryduff driver was expected to be in action at the opening round in Galway at the beginning of February only for work commitments to result in his non-attendance.

"The competition is high in the Tarmac Championship and I don't think this year is going to be any different," said Greer, who has yet to taste overall victory in the cross-border series.

"We would like to be in the mix [for silverware] but it will be tough in West Cork," he added. "If you don't get up to speed quickly you can soon find yourself outside the top 10."

Greer warmed up for the West Cork Rally by winning last weekend's Race and Rally Stages at Bishopscourt in County Down (report below).



Greer wants a fast start



Moffett will be looking to add another rally victory

JOSH MOFFETT HEADS IRISH TARMAC FIELD TO WEST CORK

Hyundai driver keen to build on successful start to 2022

By Jason Craig

Irish Tarmac Rally Championship leader Josh Moffett believes he can carry his momentum into the second round of the series in West Cork this weekend.

Moffett triumphed at the opener in Galway in early February, mastering two days of wet and windy weather on Ireland's west coast to claim a maiden victory on the event.

The Hyundai i20 R5 driver also scored maximum points at the Irish National Rally Championship curtain raiser, the Mayo Stages Rally, to underline his form.

"We have had a very strong start to the year," said Moffett, the Tarmac champion from 2018. "To go to Galway and win there in those conditions, that definitely ranks as one of my best performances."

"It isn't going to be easy, it never is in the Irish Tarmac Championship, but I don't see why I can't go [to West Cork] and do it," he added.

Classic stages including Ardfield, Ring and Ballinascorthy all feature in the two-day itinerary and has drawn entries from talent such as Callum Devine (Ford Fiesta Rally2), Alastair Fisher (Volkswagen Polo GTI R5), Jonathan Greer (Citroen

C3 Rally2) and Welsh visitor Meirion Evans (Volkswagen Polo GTI R5).

Moffett, though, is unfazed and feels his recent performances are proof of the gains he has made with his Hyundai.

"There is more to come," he said. "The pace was really strong in Galway – people could see that by the times – but at no point did I think I was driving beyond my limits, that I might end up making a mistake in those conditions."

"The car worked perfectly in the wet... if it's dry it will make our job that bit harder as there is some work to do on the set-up but when you start the year well, you do everything to keep it going," he added.

FISHER AIMS TO CLOSE POINTS GAP

Alastair Fisher aims to go one better on the West Cork Rally after finishing second to M-Sport WRC ace Craig Breen when the event was last held in 2019.

Speaking to Motorsport News, Fisher said: "I want to get off to a good clean start and I know I said that before Galway, but I think I have learned a few things from there."

The opening round ended with Fisher in seventh place while Josh Moffett took the spoils. Fisher hopes that his knowledge of the Cork stages will serve him well as he seeks to close the gap in the points table.

"The roads start to lift up [get faster] in West Cork and one has to lift it [your performance] a wee notch," he said. "I feel the rally has grown in stature over the years and it's as good as an event that a driver will get, the stages are flowing and not punctuated with baled chicanes. I particularly like the flow of the Ardfield stage."



Fisher: enjoys the stages

NORTHERN IRELAND RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP: BISHOPSCOURT BY WILLIAM NEILL MARCH 12

GREER WINS WITH FLAIR ON AN UNBEATEN NI OUTING

Jonathan Greer strengthened his Northern Ireland points advantage with a second win in as many months, this time by over half a minute in his Citroen C3 Rally2 on the Bishopscourt round.

On the 5.4-mile opener, the 2021 winner was fastest by 7.1 seconds and, with a slick tyre option, extended the advantage to 21.2s on the repeat. He went on to add to the winning margin at every opportunity under Darragh Mullen's guidance.

An early puncture and hitting tyres marking stage four wasn't enough to stop Aaron McLaughlin and Darren Curran from taking

second and narrowly missing out on an end-of-day stage win by 0.1s with their Ford Fiesta WRC. The Donegal-based driver said: "I just wish we had started the day as good as we finished it."

In a Skoda Fabia R5, Derek McGarrity, no stranger to success at the circuit, had winning hopes dashed with a SS2 overshoot and a late misfire – but, with Graham Henderson, remains a title hopeful. In County Down though, he was 8.3s behind McLaughlin.

After hitting a bale Joseph McGonigle and Ciaran Geaney climbed from seventh to fourth by the finish in a

Rally2-spec Ford Fiesta, 21.5s from McGarrity but 48.1s ahead of Joe Hegarty, who had his own drama with an off-track excursion. Fifth was the result for the R5 category challenger.

Michael McGarrity, son of third-placed Derek, had his best Bishopscourt result to date in sixth after being as far back as 14th in the morning and brake issues later. David Kelly was outside the top 30 on the opening stage and finished seventh ahead of Mark Massey in Fiesta R5. With time lost catching a car, plus from a spin and bodywork damage, Massey had an eventful day to finish

ahead of an intercom issue-hit Emma McKinstry.

Results
Organiser: Ballynahinch and District Motor Club Ltd **When:** March 12 **Where:** Bishopscourt Race Circuit, County Down
Starters: 72 **Stages:** Six
1 Jonathan Greer/Darragh Mullen (Citroen C3 Rally2) 41m02s; 2 Aaron McLaughlin/Darren Curran (Ford Fiesta WRC) +31s; 3 Derek McGarrity/Graham Henderson (Skoda Fabia R5 Evo); 4 Joseph McGonigle/Ciaran Geaney (Ford Fiesta Rally2); 5 Joe Hegarty/Ashleen Hegarty (Ford Fiesta R5); 6 Michael McGarrity/Damien Garvey (Ford Fiesta R5+); 7 David Kelly/Dean O'Sullivan (Fiesta R5); 8 Mark Massey/Alistair Wylie (Fiesta R5); 9 Emma McKinstry/Kenny Hull (Fiesta R5); 10 Robert Erwin/Andrew Wilson (Toyota MR2). **Class winners:** Drew Wylie/Stephen Jess (Ford Escort Mk2); Seamus Goodfellow/Joel McFarland (Honda Civic); Philip White/Brian Rowan (Nissan Micra); Gareth Deazley/Ashley Boulton (Ford Fiesta R200); Sam Adams/Michael Johnston (Escort Mk2); Erwin/Wilson; Alan Smyth/Gary McCrudden (Escort Mk2); David Porter/Jordan Murphy (Subaru Impreza); Brian McFall/Vor Lamont (Ford Fiesta); Greer/Mullen; McLaughlin/Curran.



Greer strengthened his grip in the Northern Ireland points chase



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SPORTING SCENE NEWS

GODFREY TARGETS SEVENTH BRX TITLE IN FIESTA SUPERCAR

Engine builder predicts an uphill battle in his older Ford machine

Photos: Linnemann RX, 5 Nations BRX



Godfrey will return in his Ford Fiesta

By Hal Ridge

Six-time Supercar champion Julian Godfrey will embark on a quest for a record-breaking seventh crown this season in the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy, to move him ahead of series legend Dermot Carnegie.

Godfrey, who finished fourth in the standings last year following a number of technical issues with his venerable Ford Fiesta Supercar, will once again campaign the ex-Pat Doran machine run by his own Julian Godfrey Engineering team.

The renowned engine builder, who has claimed titles at each of the series’ levels he has competed in, graduated to the Supercar division in 2011 and won the biggest title in his first five attempts. He claimed a sixth crown in 2019.

“I’m going to use the same car and try

to be at the front,” said Godfrey. “It gets harder as more and more fast drivers come in, but I was a bit unlucky last year. In the first round at Lydden Hill I lost drive in the final, then had a problem through the day in round two. I won at Pembrey and then had dramas again at Knockhill. I think the bad luck made my position compared to the front look worse than it was.”

Godfrey is looking forward to the two overseas events for the series this year. “I raced at Dreux [France] in 2012 in Super1600,” he added. “The conditions weren’t good that weekend but it’s a good track and that will be a good event this year. I really like Mondello Park in Ireland. That has been quite a kind track to me over the years so I’m looking forward to going there. I think it’s still possible for me to win the championship, it is very competitive now but if I can have less bad luck than last year, I do think it’s possible.”

LINNEMANN PLOTS EUROPEAN RALLYCROSS CAMPAIGN FOR 2022

Multiple European Rallycross Championship race-winner Ulrik Linnemann will return to the series this year in the RX1 (Supercar) category with a Ford Fiesta.

The Danish driver made a name for himself as a frontrunner for almost a decade in the Super1600 (now RX3) division. He made his debut in 2008 and scored his first

podium in 2010.

He placed runner-up in the front-wheel-drive series on three occasions up until 2017.

Linnemann graduated to Supercar for the following year and has achieved final starts in the European series, along with podiums and wins in RallyX Nordic. Having not contested a full Euro RX campaign since

2018, Linnemann is embarking on a challenge to finish in the top five this season.

The 33-year-old explained: “It’s always been my dream and my plan to return to Euro RX – ever since I stepped away, I’ve been missing it.

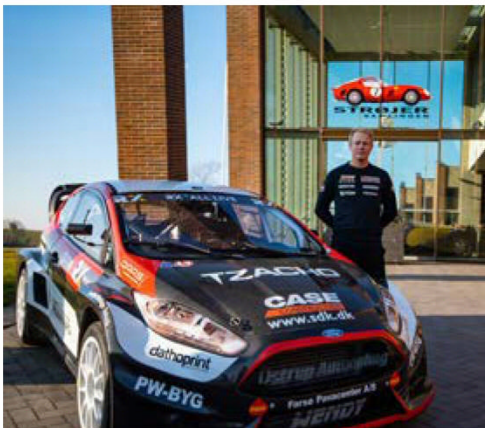
“My heart has always been in the European Championship. For me, it’s the best racing, the

highest calibre of competition and quite simply, just the right place to be. We’ve been there-or-thereabouts so many times, and I’ve raced against some of the top rallycross drivers around, which has unquestionably helped to develop my experience and racecraft.

“The Fiesta probably isn’t right

at the top level, but I don’t think we will be too far away. The car showed some decent pace last year, and we’ve made some more changes over the winter to refine it a bit further.

“We have some testing planned ahead of the season start, too, so I’m hopeful we’ll be in reasonable shape come the first round in Hungary.”



Linnemann has big plans for 2022

FLITNEY EXPANDS HORIZONS INTO EUROPE

British rallycross Supercar racer Dom Flitney has eyes on outings in the European Rallycross Championship with his Volvo C30.

Flitney made his maiden start in the ex-Frode Holte Volvo at Lydden Hill last year and has committed to a full 5 Nations BRX

campaign in 2022. Alongside that, the former single-make Suzuki Swift racer would like to challenge himself further afield.

He said: “I’m not planning on any sort of campaign, but I’d like to do a few rounds. I’ve always found if you want to be fast, you’ve got to follow fast people, and have a few goes in the European Championship. I’m hoping I can learn there and then bring those skills back to the British championship to push me further up the standings.”



Flitney wants to follow fast people in 2022

WICKENS PLOTS MIXED RX CAMPAIGN IN 2022

Esports star turned real-life rallycross racer Wesley Wickens plans to contest a combined season of British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy and BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship events this year.

Wickens’ 2021 campaign was dogged by engine issues with his single-make BMW Mini, but the car is currently being fettled by the Bell Rallycross Team ahead of Wickens’ schedule of events in 2022.

“At the moment the plan is to do half and half, half the Clubmans and half the 5



Wickens will selected his rallycross events for the new season

Nations BRX rounds,” said the racer, who laid out his steps into the discipline in Motorsport News’s Getting Started supplement last week.

“Mostly, I will do the events at Lydden and a couple of the ones at Pembrey. Hopefully the car will be all ready.

“The Bells are putting it back

together for me, to make sure we don’t have the same issues as last year.

“We did a test at Blyton Park recently and it didn’t run very well, so they’re just making sure it’s reliable and everything so hopefully this year we can go into more events and not have massive engine trouble like we did last year.”

BRISCA FORMULA 2 ROUND-UP

Mildenhall Stadium’s opening meeting of 2022 brought a maiden BRISCA F2 feature final win for Aaron Patch. The Cheshire driver was kicking himself after missing victory in his heat when a last-bend challenge on Daniel Vaughan only succeeded in spinning both cars. But he made amends with a dominant display

in the final.

A good start left Patch running third early on, and he shoved Charlie England wide to take the lead before half-distance. As the bigger names fought their way through traffic, Patch pulled clear and was never challenged en route to a comfortable victory. Behind him,

Charley Tomblin prevailed in an entertaining scrap for second with Lee Dimmick, who continued his strong start to the season.

Joe Marquand and Dave Sansom were the star performers at St Day in Cornwall. Having twice held off Marquand in the heats, Sansom could not

resist the Saltash man’s attack on the last corner of a thrilling final.

Third heat winner Josh Weare completed the top three.

With Chris Burgoyne absent, Liam Rennie went one better than the previous weekend at Cowdenbeath. Deposing long-time leader Trevor Harris in the closing

stages, Rennie won from reigning track champion Craig Wallace and Steven Burgoyne.

Mark Paulson

Result
Organiser: Spedeworth **When:** March 12 **Where:** Mildenhall Stadium **Starters:** 39.
1 Aaron Patch; 2 Charley Tomblin; 3 Lee Dimmick; 4 Scott Aldridge; 5 Reece Cox; 6 Andrew Palmer; 7 Charlie Guinchard; 8 Dave Polley; 9 Charlie England; 10 Jack Witts.

Organiser: Autospeed **When:** March 13 **Where:** United Downs Raceway, St Day **Starters:** 24.
1 Joe Marquand; 2 Dave Sansom; 3 Josh Weare; 4 Chris Mikulla; 5 Aaron Vaight; 6 Steven Gilbert; 7 Kieren Bradford; 8 Charlie Lobb; 9 Paul Rice; 10 Charlie Fisher.

Organiser: GMP Scotland **When:** March 12 **Where:** The Racewall, Cowdenbeath **Starters:** 12.
1 Liam Rennie; 2 Craig Wallace; 3 Steven Burgoyne; 4 Euan Millar; 5 Trevor Harris; 6 Graeme Leckie; 7 Gregor Turner; 8 Stephen Forster; 9 Peter Watt; 10 Kieran Howie.



Rivals weren’t a Patch on Aaron

HISTORICS

DOWN THE WORKSHOP

1976 ALPINE A310
Current owner: Jim Valentine



A310: Just don't tell the wife...

It came from a TV programme
Jim Valentine: "It was the star of a Wheeler Dealers TV show. The production company failed to find a buyer on the show. I needed another car like a hole in the head (and wallet) but I'd made a very low offer on the car. They'd snorted and said no way."

He finally got it
"There the deal sat, but about once a month someone would ring wondering if I wanted to pay more. The calls died down and then, three months after the last call, there was another conversation and I owned an A310. I had to hide it in a barn for three months before I could find an opportune moment to confess to my wife and family that I'd bought another car. We have two cats as a result of the 'exchange of views' that followed."

The engine let go
"At Castle Combe it put up an oil warning light briefly as it turned right at Quarry Corner. It seemed to be running fine, I checked the oil level and went out again, and it did it on every lap. Five laps later the light came up, this time with expensive noises as they'd clearly fried the head gaskets in filming the show. We'd anticipated the engine letting go at some point, just not so soon."

It has been a challenge
"Being a fibreglass body with a central spine chassis I didn't much fancy crashing in the car. So, a rollcage was built by Peter at Fabricage. In the original car the front seats were bolted through the fibreglass floor on four 10mm bolts. Peter couldn't actually find a solid part of the car to mount the cage on. It's a credit to his creativity that it is effectively mounted on itself while also providing proper protection underneath, a frame for a sump guard and proper seat mountings."

It was crashed...
"It has taken a lot of work to get the car to where it is now, in large part thanks to Alpine specialist John Law. We'd gone from 97th to 71st on the East Riding Stages when we fell off. The sump guard was too close to the floor and lifted one wheel, we think, just as I went back on the power. That took us into the hedge, I turned the car further into the hedge to avoid a telegraph pole and the car spat back on to stage. Debris was thrown impressive distances from the car."

SHELSLEY TO HOST BRM CELEBRATION IN JULY

British marque reflects on 60 years at Worcestershire venue

By Paul Lawrence

The story of the BRM Grand Prix team will be a central feature of this year's Classic Nostalgia weekend at Shelsley Walsh on July 16-17.

The hillclimb event has been selected as one of three flagship events at which BRM will celebrate the 60th anniversary of its 1962 World Championship victory with Graham Hill. The weekend will include a collection of more than 20 historic BRMs curated by British Racing Motors, the BRM Association and the Owen family. Topping the on-track action will be demonstration runs from the stunning BRMP15 recreation, which will bring the incredible sound of the 1953-designed BRM V16 engine back to Shelsley. Special guests for the weekend will include former BRM drivers Richard Attwood and Mike Wilds



Photos: Paul Lawrence

BRM P15 has history on the hills

along with Sir Alfred Owen's grandsons Nick, Paul and Simon as well as other notable BRM guests. The Hepworth family will bring the ex-Pedro Rodriguez BRMP154 Can-Am car. There are strong links between BRM and Shelsley Walsh as the quintessentially British team was

founded during the late 1940s by Raymond Mays, who had a long and successful history at the venue. Between 1923 and 1950 he set Best Time of the Day on 21 occasions, most at the wheel of ERAs. "It will feel like a real homecoming for BRM," said

Paul Owen. "Not only was Shelsley very special to Raymond Mays: Ken Wharton demonstrated the V16 there during the 1950s, and hillclimbers like Tony Marsh, Tony Griffiths and Peter Lawson enjoyed considerable success in BRMs through the 1960s."



More than 100 cars will tackle the three-day HERO-ERA contest

FLYING SCOTSMAN BACK ON TRACK IN APRIL

A capacity entry of 100 mainly Pre-War cars will tackle the 12th edition of the Flying Scotsman rally as the event returns after a two-year Covid absence. The HERO-ERA rally (April 1-3) is the UK's leading rally for Pre-War cars and a stellar entry has been gathered. From the start at Hexham in Northumberland, crews will head north to the first overnight halt in St Andrews. The route then moves into the Cairngorms with a second

overnight halt in Aviemore before finishing at Gleneagles Hotel on Sunday afternoon. The rally has a traditional mix of regularity sections and special tests on private land. Almost half the entries come from 13 overseas countries and overall there is a remarkable tally of 33 Bentleys. A 1922 Bentley is the oldest car while regular racers like Ewen Getley, Duncan Pittaway and Tarek Mahmoud will all switch to rallying for the weekend.

Ex-McRae Focus tops £400,000 at auction

The ex-Colin McRae Ford Focus WRC registered Y4 FMC sold for £423,300 at auction earlier this month. The Silverstone Auctions sale marks what is thought to be a new record for such a car, which was built in time for McRae and Nicky Grist to give it a debut win on the 2001 Acropolis Rally in June. It finished second in New Zealand before McRae famously rolled heavily out of Rally GB on the Rhonda stage, costing him a shot at a second World Rally Championship crown. It was later rebuilt by M-Sport and rallied from 2006 to 2011 by Paul Benn and Hugh Hunter. It was then retired and restored to 2001 specification.



Famous car was sold on

Willan makes perfect start in Cheshire

Victory on the opening round of the Motorsport News-backed HRCR Clubmans Historic Rally Championship, the recent Tour of Cheshire, has put reigning champion Dan Willan and co-driver Niall Frost into the early championship lead in their Volvo PV544. More than 100 drivers and co-drivers have now registered for the season and the 10-round schedule continues on April 3 with the North Yorkshire Classic, the first of four Yorkshire-based events in the calendar. The event, based in York, will feature 100 miles of regularity sections circling the city and 12 special tests.



Willan won in Cheshire

RARE LENHAM READY FOR FRESH SEASON



The Lenham sports-racing car campaigned by father-and-son Simon and Cam Jackson last year will be back on the Guards Trophy grid this season. The car is currently being refettled by Neil Fowler and his team ahead of the opening Guards race at Silverstone in mid-May. Though fast last year, the Lenham only finished one of its three races with a second place at Brands Hatch in July.

IN BRIEF

Ford's top spot
Top seed in the historic field on Saturday's North West Stages is Welshman James Ford who starts at an impressive car 18 in his Ford Escort Mk2, well up among many modern R5s. Chasing Ford, from car 42, will be North Wales Ford Escort Mk2 driver Will Rowlands who has become something of a closed-road expert in recent times. Six historic are in the capacity 125-car field.

Bean pushes on
Yorkshire rallying veteran Bob Bean celebrated his 84th birthday on March 8 and will next compete on Rally North Wales on March 26. Cleckheaton-based Bean, who has been rallying for the better part of 60 years, will field his familiar Ford Lotus Cortina in pursuit of his second Category 1 (pre '68) BHRC victory of the season.

Busy Williams
Rally co-driver David Williams will have covered both ends of the rallying spectrum in March, starting with tackling the recent Tour of Cheshire road rally in the open Bentley Special of Rob Atkinson. On March 26, Williams will be back in the co-driver's seat of the Group 4 historic Ford Escort Mk2 of rallying returnee Will Onions for Rally North Wales.

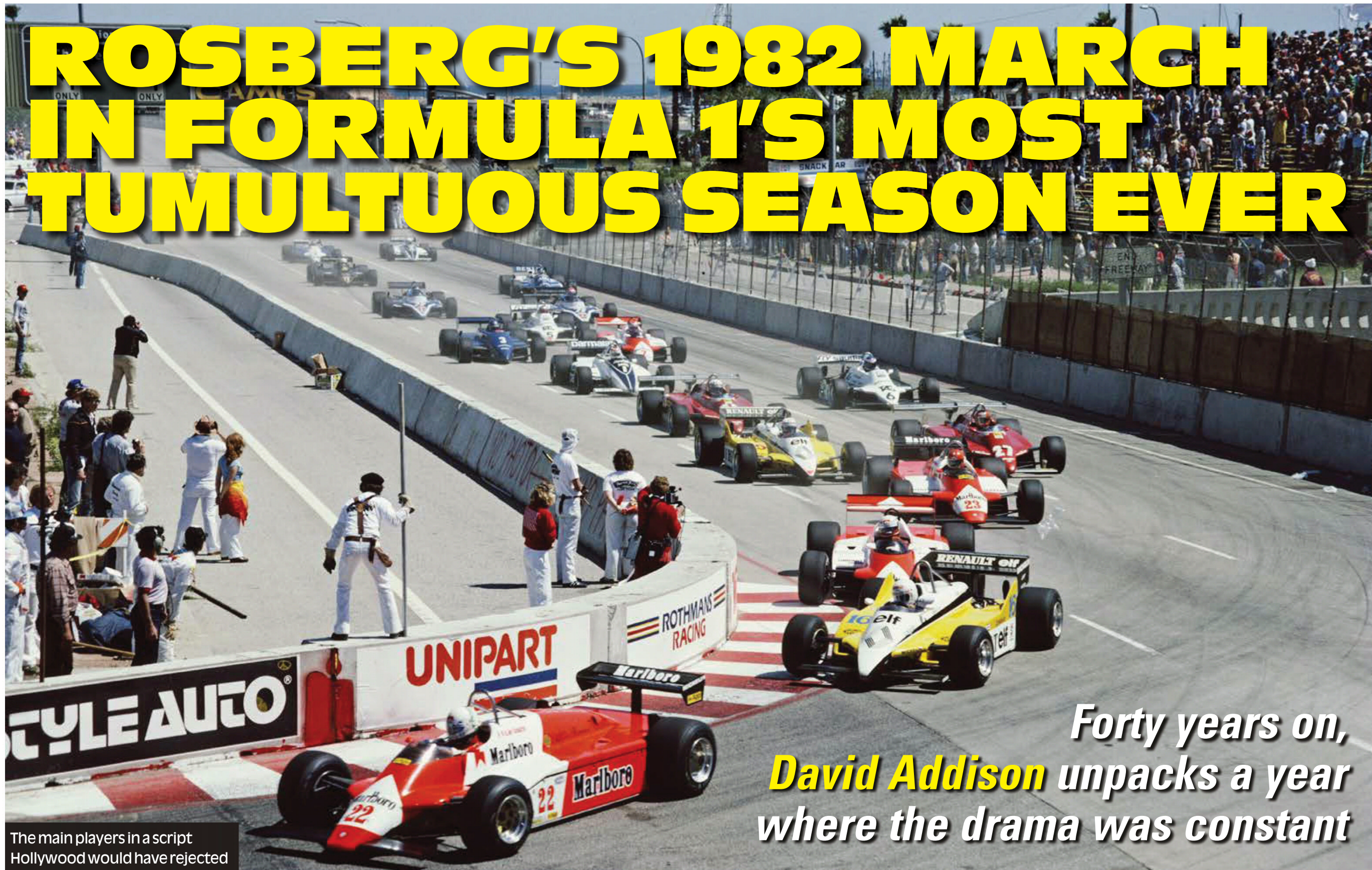
AGBO is go
Ben Friend and Tom Llewellyn will head the historic entries on Sunday's AGBO Stages in Weston Park. The Shropshire venue offers around 30 miles of competition on narrow asphalt roads and reigning BHRC champion Friend will have Abi Haycock alongside as co-driver. As ever, the popular event has drawn a capacity 75-car entry.

Guards get six
The 2022 Guards Trophy for pre '66 GT cars and pre '69 sports-racing cars will feature a six-event schedule including races at Silverstone GP, Donington Park, Brands Hatch GP and the re-launched Oulton Park Gold Cup. Going into the championship's 49th season, having started life as Classic Sports in 1974, the HSCC is pushing to attract more GT cars of all engine sizes into the 40-minute mini-enduro races.

Land's End trial
The Motor Cycling Club's Land's End trial will return on Good Friday and Easter Saturday (April 15-16) when as many as 300 competitors on two, three and four wheels tackle a range of famous hills including the Blue Hills sections near St Agnes. The event will have three starts from Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Cornwall before the common route starts from Bridgewater.

FEATURE

ROSBERG'S 1982 MARCH IN FORMULA 1'S MOST TUMULTUOUS SEASON EVER



*Forty years on,
David Addison unpacks a year
where the drama was constant*

The main players in a script
Hollywood would have rejected



World champion Keke Rosberg (l) greets Diana Ross and Las Vegas Grand Prix winner Michele Alboreto

How to remember the 1982 Formula 1 season, a tumultuous year for sure? The year that Keke Rosberg won the title? The year that Gilles Villeneuve was killed?

The year that began with a drivers' strike and had a race boycotted by some teams? Or the year that team orders became acrimonious in the extreme at Ferrari? Those elements of the season barely scratch the surface.

Keke Rosberg won the championship, the Finn moving to Williams to replace Alan Jones who had retired at the end of '81. He won but once, the Swiss Grand Prix held in France (which seemed apt for 1982's contrary nature) but did enough to go to Caesars Palace for the final with an advantage over John Watson. "I had to win the race with Keke fifth or lower," remembers Wattie. "Ron Dennis told

Niki Lauda, my team-mate, the facts of life about helping me, but Niki didn't like that. On race day he was there in body but not spirit."

Michele Alboreto won the last race for Tyrrell thus sinking Watson's championship dream. He finished second with Rosberg fifth, job done for the Finn. Rosberg was the champion with Watson second equal. He tied on points with Didier Pironi who hadn't raced since France, a massive accident in free practice at Hockenheim ending his season and career.

On the way, 1982 had twists and turns all the way. It began with a row over superlicences and a drivers' strike in South Africa, before Alain Prost's Renault won, and then the exclusion of the top two (Nelson Piquet and Rosberg) in Brazil over liquids carried in their cars that were deemed to be water for brake cooling. While Prost inherited a second win, more surprises came in Long Beach: Andrea de Cesaris took his first pole for Alfa Romeo and comeback kid Niki Lauda

1982 ROUND-BY-ROUND

1 South African Grand Prix Kyalami

January 23

1 Alain Prost (Renault)
2 Carlos Reutemann (Williams)
3 Rene Arnoux (Renault)

When the race finally got underway, Rene Arnoux led from pole in his Renault until team-mate Alain

Prost powered through. The new leader suffered a puncture and dropped outside the top six but clawed his way back to the front on his fresher tyres to win. Williams driver Carlos Reutemann also overtook Arnoux in the latter stages to claim second spot.



2 Brazilian Grand Prix Jacarepagua

March 21

1 Alain Prost (Renault)
2 John Watson (McLaren)
3 Nigel Mansell (Lotus)
Gilles Villeneuve took the lead at the start but spun his Ferrari on lap 30, handing the advantage to Nelson Piquet's Brabham.

Keke Rosberg (Williams) kept the reigning World champion honest throughout and finished a close second. However, a protest from Renault and Ferrari led to the top two being kicked out, handing the win to Alain Prost (Renault). John Watson (McLaren) inherited second place.



Photos: Motorsport Images



John Watson was a major player



Elio de Angelis helped Lotus back into the Formula 1 winners' circle



Didier Pironi was sidelined before the end of the season with injury



Renault was fast, but very fragile...

won the race. And then came Imola... The FOCA teams, mostly the British or small independent outfits, boycotted the race in response to the exclusion of Piquet and Rosberg in Brazil. The race would still count for points and would be a Ferrari benefit, Didier Pironi and Gilles Villeneuve trading the lead. Villeneuve was ahead towards the end and believed that team orders would keep him there. Pironi didn't. At the time, Villeneuve said:

"It truly was a Formula 1 season like no other"

"We were marginal on fuel and when I took the lead we got a 'slow' sign. That means hold position. It's been the case ever since I went there..." Pironi either misunderstood or ignored the sign. Either way, he passed Villeneuve who felt betrayed and the pair never spoke again. Two weeks later, Villeneuve was dead. Zolder was the scene of a crash in qualifying in which Villeneuve, leaving nothing on the table, tripped over Jochen Mass' March and cartwheeled to his death. The race went ahead, Watson winning from Rosberg, Pironi's Ferrari withdrawn and Prost leaving Belgium as the championship leader by a point from Watson. Then came Monaco and a crazy last few laps in drizzle with cars spinning, stalling and running out of fuel. Through the mayhem came Brabham's Riccardo Patrese for his first F1 win, despite a spin on the penultimate lap. Detroit was next and a two-part race, after Patrese crashed at Turn 1 seven laps

in and stopped proceedings. It had been a difficult weekend with Friday practice delayed repeatedly with drivers concerned over tyre (make that tire...) barriers. Friday qualifying was cancelled and the 1000hrs practice session began at 1545hrs. Wattie won from 17th on the grid and assumed the lead of the championship. Piquet won in Canada and kept the win, the race marred by a startline accident, which claimed the life of Riccardo Paletti making his second GP start. He ploughed into a stalled Pironi and his Osella crumpled to his chest. Pironi bounced back to win in Holland and to close to within one point of championship leader Watson, and Didier's second place behind Lauda at Brands Hatch was enough to give him the championship lead. Rene Arnoux won for Renault at Paul Ricard before Hockenheim delivered another seismic moment in the championship story. Fastest on Friday, Pironi was eager to discover what the circuit was like in the

wet on Saturday. Under brooding skies, engulfed in spray, Pironi hit the back of Prost's Renault which acted as a ramp. The Ferrari went airborne, crash-landed nose-first and then slewed into the barriers. Didier was conscious but in terrible pain, the front of the car torn off. It ended his season and as it would transpire, his F1 career. In the Hollywood-esque narrative of the season, Patrick Tambay, who had replaced Villeneuve, won for Ferrari the day after. Elio de Angelis gave Lotus its first win since Holland 1978 by winning by five-hundredths of a second from Rosberg in Austria, the last time Colin Chapman would throw his hat in the air after a win, for he would die in December. Rosberg finally won in France, Dijon hosting the Swiss-badged race with motor racing still banned in Switzerland, a race in which as he closed on leader Prost, French officials tried hanging out the flag two laps early! Thankfully, Williams team manager Peter Collins spotted this and distracted them.

Next, Arnoux won at Monza. Ah, Monza. Ferrari had run just one car after Pironi's accident but now accepted he wasn't returning anytime soon. Who to call? Step forward Mario Andretti, the Italian-born 1978 World champion taking pole for the Italian Grand Prix in an Italian car. The 42-year-old was a hero and after a sticking throttle was third in the race, won by Arnoux from Tambay. To Caesars Palace. Rosberg had 42 points to Watson's 33. Between them, Pironi on 39, proof of the extraordinary nature of the season. Wattie qualified ninth, Rosberg sixth. John, always a better racer than qualifier, tried his all and was third behind Alboreto before leader Prost suffered a soft brake pedal and a vibration. He fell to fourth, but Watson also had a vibration and he couldn't catch Alboreto, with Rosberg banking points in fifth to take the crown. It was Rosberg's only title, it was Watson's best shot. It was a year like no other. ■

3 United States Grand Prix (West)
Long Beach
April 4
1 Niki Lauda (McLaren)
2 Keke Rosberg (Williams)
3 Riccardo Patrese (Brabham)
When surprise pole position man Andrea de Cesaris (Alfa Romeo) missed a gear, McLaren's

returning champion Niki Lauda was in the perfect place to pounce for the lead on lap 15, which he would not relinquish. De Cesaris later crashed out. Keke Rosberg (Williams) was a distant second, while Gilles Villeneuve's Ferrari was kicked out of third place for an illegal rear wing after a protest by Tyrrell.



4 San Marino Grand Prix
Imola
April 25
1 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)
2 Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari)
3 Michele Alboreto (Tyrrell)
At the height of the FISA-FOCA war, only 14 cars took the start at Imola. The Renaults of Rene Arnoux and Alain Prost

dominated qualifying but both cars broke down in the race. That left Ferrari's Gilles Villeneuve leading from team-mate Didier Pironi. Villeneuve believed he was following team orders to slow and protect the result, Pironi had a different interpretation of the demand and zoomed ahead to win. The pair never spoke again.



FEATURE

The King Rat returns and shows his nous

"I always liked Niki," recalls John Watson. "I never had a problem with any team-mate and I knew what he was like from my time with him at Brabham, so I was ready for him."

Niki Lauda's return to Formula 1, after he walked away in Canada in 1979, was a major talking point. Would he be up to it? Would he be fast enough? Would he take over Wattie's team? "Ron [Dennis] made it clear that there was no number one and no number two driver. He just wanted a McLaren to win. I don't think Niki liked that."

Lauda arrived as fit as a butcher's dog after an intensive training programme with Willi Dungl, something new to F1 at the time, witness Marlboro-smoking World champion Keke Rosberg. But when Lauda won his third race, at Long Beach, people realised this was a serious return and not just for money, although his retainer was a significant one.

"Niki was never a great overtaker," remembers Watson, "but he played to his strength in qualifying a car near the front and by getting the team to work around him. But I was a better racer: in Detroit, I passed Niki and then Eddie Cheever and Didier Pironi which I think woke him up and he eventually made a move. But if I hadn't done that, he'd still be there now. In March 2021!"

Fifth in the championship with two wins may not have been the fairy tale return, but two years later he was World champion again.



Lauda impressed on his return to Formula 1



Niki Lauda was his typical shrewd self...



Villeneuve and Pironi: that fatal Imola battle



A fractured relationship: Pironi and Villeneuve (r) became enemies after San Marino

The Ferrari 1-2 that led to a tragedy

With FOCA teams boycotting the San Marino Grand Prix, it was a 14-strong entry that graced Imola, but fans had eyes for just two cars: the Ferrari 126Cs of Gilles Villeneuve and Didier Pironi.

A 1-2 finish was desired, nay expected, but which car would it be?

The two traded the lead, their initial fight with Rene Arnoux's Renault RE30B over when the French car broke its engine. The tifosi remained thrilled with the scarlet cars alternating in the lead, but Villeneuve eventually moved ahead and was content to reduce his pace.

Out came a 'slow' sign, Ferrari's way of telling its drivers to hold station but Pironi had other ideas. Seven laps from home, Pironi passed Villeneuve, but Gilles fought back and took over the lead on the penultimate lap. All good, he thought.

But on the last lap, Pironi went ahead again. Villeneuve was convinced the win was his and he had been betrayed by Pironi who had ignored team orders. Pironi told Auto Hebdo: "This kind of recommendation does not exist, except in special cases."

He believed that they were free to race, as long as they didn't collide or run dry of fuel.

They did neither, but Villeneuve remained bitter.

He looked sullen on the podium, refused to go on the lap of honour and rejected Pironi's take on events. The relationship would never be mended.

1982 ROUND-BY-ROUND

5 Belgian Grand Prix
Zolder
May 9

1 John Watson (McLaren)
2 Keke Rosberg (Williams)
3 Eddie Cheever (Talbot Ligier)

Renault again proved fast but fragile with a front-row lock out but a turbo problem hit Rene Arnoux and Alain Prost spun out. That left Williams man Keke Rosberg in the lead on old tyres over the closing stages. On the penultimate lap, Rosberg slid wide and



let McLaren driver John Watson through to win. Talbot Ligier driver Eddie Cheever claimed a superb third place.

6 Monaco Grand Prix
Monte Carlo
May 23

1 Riccardo Patrese (Brabham)
2 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)
3 Andrea de Cesaris (Alfa Romeo)

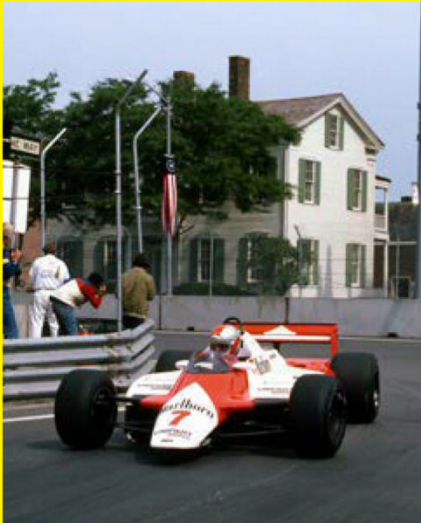
An utterly bonkers race. Alain Prost seemed set for a famous victory for Renault until he spun as drizzle hit the Cote d'Azur. Riccardo Patrese inherited the lead and then spun, while victory contender Didier Pironi's Ferrari ran out of fuel, as did Andrea de Cesaris's Alfa, just as it was due to inherit the lead. Patrese got going again to claim his maiden F1 victory.



7 Detroit Grand Prix
Detroit
June 6

1 John Watson (McLaren)
2 Eddie Cheever (Talbot Ligier)
3 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)

There was a chaotic start when the race was red-flagged early on for a shunt between Roberto Guerrero (Ensign) and Riccardo Patrese (Brabham). From 17th on the grid, John Watson rose magnificently through the pack. The Renaults failed again, and Watson edged up on pacesetter Keke Rosberg (Williams) and took the lead and powered clear. Eddie Cheever was second for Ligier.



Photos: Motorsport Images

F1's brightest star is extinguished in Belgium

Didier Pironi was a tenth faster than Gilles Villeneuve. With the bitterness after San Marino still boiling, Gilles went out to make sure that he ended the day faster than his team-mate.

The day before, the French-Canadian had complained about getting through traffic, and as the session entered its last 10 minutes, Villeneuve encountered the March 821 of Jochen Mass.

"Mass saw him coming," remembers John Watson who would win the race the day after. "The closing speed was high, but Jochen tried to do the right thing and move over.

"Gilles, thinking he could get away with anything, committed to the outside and a closing gap. It was an avoidable accident. Gilles always had to be the fastest guy. He was clearly gifted and talented but was motivated by speed and could never put together a campaign because he was always thinking about the race he was in or the lap he was on, not the bigger picture.

"He wanted to beat Pironi after Imola and I think that poisoned his judgement."

The Ferrari cartwheeled to destruction, its kart-stiff suspension a contributing factor to the accident as with no suspension movement available, the wheel-to-wheel contact with the March merely acted as a springboard.

FISA set up an enquiry and later that month made its findings public. Its first is the most chilling: "The cause of the accident was attributed to driver error on the part of Gilles Villeneuve."

For many, a hero, the bravest man in a racing car was gone.

Villeneuve on one of his final Formula 1 laps



The delighted Riccardo Patrese



Spinning the casino wheel to find a winner

The majority of the Monaco Grand Prix had been on the tedious side. Rene Arnoux led from pole but spun and stalled after 15 laps, handing the lead to team-mate Alain Prost.

Late-race drizzle made the circuit, already oily, treacherous in the extreme. With two laps to go, and with Riccardo Patrese's Brabham chasing him hard, Prost lost it exiting the chicane after the tunnel, the car head-butting the Armco. He was out on the spot and Patrese led. Briefly. As he approached the Station Hairpin, the Brabham languidly slid sideways and stalled. It wouldn't restart.

That allowed Didier Pironi to grab the lead, but his Ferrari was slow past the pits. Was he being cautious? Nope. Failed electrics stopped the car on the last lap, as Andrea de Cesaris took the lead in his Alfa Romeo. No, scrap that. De Cesaris was stranded trackside, out of fuel. So Derek Daly led. No again. He'd damaged the rear of his



Daly missed out on podium

car a few laps earlier, smashing the gearbox oil pump. He kept going as long as there was oil in what was left in the gearbox but the cogs eventually seized.

Pity the blue-blazer official with the chequered flag, awaiting the winner but with no idea who it would be. The cars that passed him a lap ago had stopped, and after a long wait, towards him came...Patrese. Pushed out of a dangerous place by marshals, the car had fired up and he continued for his first grand prix win.

Watson's top gear from the rear in the Motor City

"He's a bachelor and fits the romantic stereotype Hollywood image of a Grand Prix racer. He is pink-cheeked and the eyes are an icy-blue. The nose is sharp and the hair runs modishly down the back of his neck..."

That was how The Detroit News described John Watson, winner of the first Motown grand prix.

On a circuit that was far from acceptable on day one of the event, Wattie dug deep but even he didn't expect to be a contender from 17th on the grid. Yep, 17th. "We ran a Michelin tyre," remembers Watson. "It was good on street circuits but more in races where the car was heavier with the fuel, so it got the tyres working well. I was 13th when Patrese went off at turn one and they stopped

the race. We formed back on the grid and I was just sitting in the car when Pierre Dupasquier came up to me."

Dupasquier was the head of Michelin's motorsport department and had an idea. "He said, 'John take those tyres off and put these on and you will win the race'. I had no idea what the difference was but the ones I went to were termed 'durable' rather than 'hard'. I don't think the team management knew I'd changed but it transformed the car.

"I got past Bruno Giacomelli in an elbows-out move and then got Niki Lauda, Eddie Cheever and Didier Pironi. I did Keke Rosberg for the lead but then I had to pull away to build the gap from part one: they were two part races in those days. The car was a joy."



A neat tyre strategy helped Watson claim a triumph



Watson was elated with his second victory of 1982

8 Canadian Grand Prix Montreal June 13

1 Nelson Piquet (Brabham)
2 Riccardo Patrese (Brabham)
3 John Watson (McLaren)

Didier Pironi stalled his Ferrari on the line and unsighted, Osella driver Riccardo Paletti perished when his machine slammed into the stationary car. From fourth spot on the grid, reigning World champion Nelson Piquet, in his BMW-powered car, took control of the race and led home his



Brabham team-mate Riccardo Patrese. Patrese's machine was fitted with a normally aspirated Cosworth DFV.

9 Dutch Grand Prix Zandvoort July 3

1 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)
2 Nelson Piquet (Brabham)
3 Keke Rosberg (Williams)

Pole position starter Rene Arnoux provided the drama in the race between the sand dunes when the throttle stuck open on his Renault and he crashed heavily at Tarzan.

Team-mate Alain Prost had an engine failure, and pacesetter Didier Pironi claimed the win for Ferrari, ahead of Nelson Piquet's Brabham.



10 British Grand Prix Brands Hatch July 18

1 Niki Lauda (McLaren)
2 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)
3 Patrick Tambay (Ferrari)

A startline accident eliminated Rene Arnoux's Renault and front-

row starter Riccardo Patrese in his Brabham. Pole winner Keke Rosberg's Williams was thwarted by a fuel problem and had to start from the back while John Watson (McLaren) spun off. Through it all came Niki Lauda's McLaren for victory, his second of the season.

FEATURE



Paletti was making a good impression



There was carnage at the grand prix start

Dark clouds hang over the Canadian Grand Prix

The bespectacled 23-year-old Italian was making his first grand prix grid start. His previous attempt at Imola was scuppered when the car wouldn't fire up and he got away late, so by the time he had finished his warm-up lap,

the race had started. This time there were no such problems. Riccardo Paletti's Osella FA1C was 23rd on the grid and as he accelerated away, his morning warm-up crash in Detroit causing him to miss the race was forgotten. He was away.

With 10,500 rpm on the clock, Paletti changed up and grabbed third gear. As he did so, he ploughed into Didier Pironi's stalled Ferrari on pole position. The impact was huge, the car having reached 120mph. The front crumpled to the

Italian's chest. Pironi leapt from his car to go to Paletti's aid and medical delegate Sid Watkins and his team were working on Paletti within nine seconds of the impact. After 30 seconds, fuel ignited. Petrol ran from the car

underneath it which helped to feed the fire. Pironi directed the marshals and RAM's John MacDonald waded into the flames to try to free Paletti. It took 28 minutes to cut him free and be helicoptered to hospital where he died later

of massive internal injuries. Paletti's baptism in F1 had been difficult but his confidence was increasing and he was becoming quicker in the Denim-backed Italian car. His death was one of the sadder footnotes in the story of the season.

Didier Pironi: The F1 champ who was never crowned

"It was a vanity lap." That was John Watson's description of Didier Pironi's last lap in a Formula 1 car in 1982.

The weather at Hockenheim that Saturday was awful and the rain and spray hung in the air, trapped between the trees. Alain Prost, no lover of the wet, was heading at reduced pace to the pits. The faster Derek Daly (Williams), running ahead of Pironi, moved over to pass the Renault and Pironi assumed Daly was letting him by. He hurtled into the spray and the back of the Renault. The accident was a huge one and Pironi was trapped in the wreckage.

Nelson Piquet, Eddie Cheever and Nigel Mansell all stopped and ran to help, Pironi reportedly shouting, "Get me out of here!" in French and then English. The

threat of a fire was in his mind. He had multiple fractures of both legs, including the tibia and fibula bones in his right ankle and the humerus bone in his left arm. His nose was broken and he had severe bruising to the head.

Blood loss was significant and he was in shock. Still conscious Pironi heard circuit medics talk of amputation. He begged them not to and he was transferred to Heidelberg hospital where saving his right leg was the priority. A year later he returned to an F1 paddock still on crutches. It was 1985 before he drove an F1 car again, an ex-Rosberg Williams in the private collection of Jack Stretton. He was the champion who never was.



Pironi was one of the title favourites before Germany

TOP 10 SEEDED ENTRY LIST

11 French Grand Prix
Paul Ricard
July 25

- 1 Rene Arnoux (Renault)
 - 2 Alain Prost (Renault)
 - 3 Didier Pironi (Ferrari)
- Renault, being as it was performing in its home grand prix, decided to bolt everything together properly for a change in France. However, as Rene Arnoux led team-mate Alain Prost, he conveniently forgot a pre-race pact to cede to his sister car to help Prost's championship cause. Ferrari drivers Didier Pironi and Patrick Tambay were third and fourth in a rout for the turbo cars.



12 German Grand Prix
Hockenheim
August 8

- 1 Patrick Tambay (Ferrari)
 - 2 Rene Arnoux (Renault)
 - 3 Keke Rosberg (Williams)
- In a gloomy and wet qualifying session, Ferrari ace Didier Pironi was gravely injured after an accident. Pole position, which the Frenchman had claimed, was left empty. Nelson Piquet's Brabham scampered away in the



lead, plotting a halfway pitstop, but he was taken out by contact with ATS driver Eliseo Salazar before he was due to halt. Patrick Tambay (Ferrari) took an emotional win for the Italian team.



13 Austrian Grand Prix
Osterreichring
August 15

- 1 Elio de Angelis (Lotus)
 - 2 Keke Rosberg (Williams)
 - 3 Jacques Laffite (Talbot Ligier)
- A badly timed pitstop thwarted Nelson Piquet (Brabham) and he later retired, while team-mate

Riccardo Patrese, who had inherited the lead, had engine failure. Alain Prost's Renault led until a handful of laps from home when it suffered an injector problem. Elio de Angelis (Lotus) took his maiden F1 win by fending off the fast-closing Williams of Keke Rosberg by just 0.050s.

Tambay's most emotional victory

An accomplished skier, Patrick Tambay had been in and out of F1 since his debut in 1977 and had been a Can-Am champion stateside. He was also close friends with Gilles Villeneuve and was in Hawaii, 10 hours behind European time, when the phone rang. It was Didier Pironi to tell him of Villeneuve's death at Zolder. Pironi told Tambay that it

was he who suggested the charismatic Frenchman to take the second seat, but Tambay doesn't know if that is true. Either way, he made his debut for the Scuderia in Holland, bagged a first podium at Brands Hatch and then took his first grand prix win at Hockenheim on the weekend that Pironi's F1 career ended. The pressure on Tambay

was huge. His was the only Ferrari on the grid that sunny Sunday and it carried the number 27, made famous by his late friend Gilles. As Nelson Piquet strolled clear of the field in a car on half tanks before a pitstop for his Brabham, he came across backmarker Eliseo Salazar and his ATS. They tangled, both were out and an incandescent Piquet tried

to kick and punch the Chilean. Tambay led a grand prix for the first time. Keeping clear of backmarkers, Tambay drove within himself, kind to the machinery and took his first win, a popular and emotional one. "The only problem I had was those straights. I could only think of Didier and Gilles and the job I had to do..." he explained afterwards.



Patrick Tambay had plenty of time to think on Hockenheim straights

Photos: Motorsport Images

A single 1982 win was enough for Rosberg



The Finnish fan club in effect

The Flying Finn lands the biggest prize

Had Alan Jones not retired at the end of 1981, Keijo Rosberg's career could have been very different. After a desultory time in '81 for Fittipaldi in which he only qualified for one of the last six races, Rosberg's career looked over. Never short on self-belief, even 'Keke' must have been wondering where to turn next. The promise of his 1978 International

Trophy win at Silverstone for Theodore, in his pre-moustache days, was a distant memory. But Jones walked. Frank Williams needed a driver, and Rosberg was available. Very. An instant hit with the Williams workforce, he was a grafter. His gear-lever broke off in the opening race in South Africa and while it rattled around the footwell, Rosberg took fifth

place. He was close to a win in Belgium, but an ailing tyre lost grip when lapping Marc Surer's Arrows on the penultimate lap and he went sideways, handing the win to John Watson. He was oh-so close to a win in Austria, Elio de Angelis just pipping him to the line in a side-by-side dash: five-hundredths was the official margin. At Dijon, the flag went out a lap late,

but Rosberg pressed on to the end of the 81st lap. He'd applied pressure to Alain Prost (Renault) to take the lead and he wasn't backing off until he saw a flag. For all his bravery, his championship-winning drive was a calculated one, doing just enough to take the points and the title and with it an acceptance by everyone that he had reached F1's elite.

POINTS

Formula 1 World Championship 1982

POS	DRIVER	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	TOT
1	Keke Rosberg	Williams	2	DQ	6	NE	6	-	3	-	4	-	2	4	6	9	-	2	44
2	Didier Pironi	Ferrari	-	1	-	9	NS	6	4	-	9	6	4	NS	-	-	-	-	39
3	John Watson	McLaren	1	6	1	NE	9	-	9	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	6	39
4	Alain Prost	Renault	9	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	-	-	6	-	3	34
5	Niki Lauda	McLaren	3	-	9	NE	DQ	-	-	-	3	9	-	NS	2	4	-	-	30
6	Rene Arnoux	Renault	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	6	-	-	9	-	28
7	Patrick Tambay	Ferrari									-	4	3	9	3	NS	6	NS	25
8	Michele Alboreto	Tyrrell	-	3	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	2	9	25
9	Elio de Angelis	Lotus	-	-	2	NE	3	2	-	3	-	3	-	-	9	1	-	-	23
10	Riccardo Patrese	Brabham	-	-	4	NE	-	9	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	21
11	Nelson Piquet	Brabham	-	DQ	-	NE	2	-	NQ	9	6	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	20
12	Eddie Cheever	Talbot Ligier	-	-	-	NE	4	-	6	-	NQ	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	15
13	Derek Daly	Theodore/Williams	-	-	-	NE	-	1	2	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	8
14	Nigel Mansell	Lotus	-	4	-	NE	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
15	Carlos Reutemann	Williams	6	-															6

16 Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari) 6; 17 Andrea de Cesaris (Alfa Romeo) 5; 18 Jacques Laffite (Talbot Ligier) 5; 19 Mario Andretti (Williams/Ferrari) 4; 20 Jean-Pierre Jarier (Osella) 3; 21 Marc Surer (Arrows) 3; 22 Bruno Giacomelli (Alfa Romeo) 2; 23 Eliseo Salazar (ATS) 2; 24 Manfred Winkelhock (ATS) 2; 25 Mauro Baldi (Arrows) 2; 26 Chico Serra (Fittipaldi) 1. **Non-scorers:** Brian Henton (Arrows/Tyrrell); Jochen Mass (March); Slim Borgudd (Tyrrell); Raul Boesel (March); Roberto Guerrero (Ensign); Derek Warwick (Toleman); Rupert Keegan (March); Geoff Lees (Theodore/Lotus); Teo Fabi (Toleman); Riccardo Paletti (Osella); Tommy Byrne (Theodore); Jan Lammers (Theodore); **Non-qualifiers:** Emilio de Villota (March); Roberto Moreno (Lotus). **Rounds:** 1 January 23, South African Grand Prix, Kyalami; 2 March 21, Brazilian Grand Prix, Jacarepagua; 3 April 4, United States Grand Prix (West), Long Beach; 4 April 25, San Marino Grand Prix, Imola; 5 May 9, Belgian Grand Prix, Zolder; 6 May 23, Monaco, Monte Carlo; 7 June 6, Detroit Grand Prix, Detroit; 8 June 13, Canadian Grand Prix, Montreal; 9 July 3, Dutch Grand Prix, Zandvoort; 10 July 18, British Grand Prix, Brands Hatch; 11 July 25, French Grand Prix, Paul Ricard; 12 August 8, German Grand Prix, Hockenheim; 13 August 15, Austrian Grand Prix, Osterreichring; 14 August 29, Swiss Grand Prix, Dijon; 15 September 12, Italian Grand Prix, Monza; 16 September 25, Caesars Palace Grand Prix, Las Vegas.



Andretti was a Monza hero

14 Swiss Grand Prix Dijon August 29

1 Keke Rosberg (Williams)
2 Alain Prost (Renault)
3 Niki Lauda (McLaren)
A superb performance from Keke Rosberg in the Cosworth-powered Williams gave him victory as he hunted down the tyre-afflicted Renault of Alain Prost and overtook on the penultimate lap. Niki Lauda (McLaren) was almost a full minute back in third place. The race ran to 81 laps rather than the scheduled 80 as there was some confusion for the flag-waver.



15 Italian Grand Prix Monza September 12

1 Rene Arnoux (Renault)
2 Patrick Tambay (Ferrari)
3 Mario Andretti (Ferrari)
Ferrari returnee Mario Andretti took a glorious pole position to delight the home fans. He was swamped at the start at Nelson Piquet (Brabham) took command until an engine problem intervened. That left Rene Arnoux (Renault) and Patrick Tambay's Ferrari battling for honours and the former prevailed to win. Andretti recovered for third place at the chequered flag.



16 Caesars Palace
Grand Prix
Las Vegas
September 25
1 Michele Alboreto (Tyrrell)
2 John Watson (McLaren)
3 Eddie Cheever (Talbot Ligier)
With the title on the line, it was easy to overlook the performance from Tyrrell

driver Michele Alboreto, who leapfrogged both Renaults of Rene Arnoux and Alain Prost to take a maiden F1 victory. Title hopeful John Watson (McLaren) was suffering a vibration and could not haul in the leader. Fifth place for Keke Rosberg (Williams) was enough for the title.

FEATURE

STEVE RIDER

THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE

TV's legendary front man tells **Matt James** and the readers of his affinity with motorsport



The man at the helm:
ITV's Steve Rider

Throughout the growth of the British Touring Car Championship, there has been one man who has been there from the start and still enjoys the series as much as ever: Steve Rider.

He is a name and a face so recognisable to the motorsport fan, having fronted BBC's Formula 1 coverage through the 1990s and also lending his weight to the transition of the BTCC from back-street national racing championship to front-page news.

Known as Mr Unflappable, Rider's laid-back approach and vast knowledge of motorsport means he is the safest pair of hands out there in terms of handling a broadcast, but there is also a laconic style of humour which cuts right to the heart of issues others might not dare to approach.

Although he has sat in the hot seat for the Olympics and the football World Cup among other huge events, it is his interest in motor racing and the stories it can provide for the viewer that have brought him back to the discipline time and again. And he hasn't stopped reflecting on the heritage motorsport already has in its locker, as you can read here.

While the BTCC battlers will be getting their heads around the new hybrid push-to-pass regulations and all that the 2022 competition has to throw at them, Rider will be there with a knowing eye watching it all unfold and delivering the drama to the public's front rooms. We gave the viewers a chance to fight back with our MN readers' questions, and his story reveals quite some journey.

Question: Where did the motorsport passion come from in you?

Jack Crowther

Via email

Steve Rider: "It came to me really. I started out as a jobbing local sports journalist in South East London and then went, through a couple of transitions through a sports agency, to eventually work with the London Broadcasting Company, but it wasn't until I got to Anglia Television in the mid-1970s that I realised the kind of material you could get from a race circuit – and how privileged you were if you went there with a TV camera.

"East Anglia was, of course, a particularly fertile area for motorsport. There was Snetterton down the road and the Lotus Formula 1 team. Snetterton was the first circuit I really remember going to, although there is a murky memory of being taken to Crystal Palace when I was very young. But I didn't really have anything to give

Photos: Motorsport Images



Rider had an insight into the Lotus team in 1978

me the bug until I was able to get the other side of the ropes, as it were.

“We started using any excuse to go to Snetterton and also to Silverstone, which was right on the edge of our patch. It was a time when you could turn up and there would be Barry Sheene, Mick Grant or anyone. The access was great. We were covering a lot of the [UK-based] Aurora Formula 1 Championship, but most of all, there was Team Lotus, Colin Chapman, Ronnie Peterson and Mario Andretti on our doorstep. We managed to forge a reasonably good relationship with Colin Chapman which enabled us to get behind the scenes a fair bit – that is really where it all started for me.”

MN: It wasn’t just sports reports: you did a documentary with Lotus, didn’t you?

SR: “Doing a documentary was half the

intention. It was during the 1978 season and Lotus was dominating the grand prix year. We had been doing a lot of work with the team and Colin said ‘why don’t you come out to Monza, the race where we will be claiming the championship?’ He thought we could do a little portrait of the team as it claimed the silverware, and the thought was that it would go into the regional broadcast schedule. We were looking to produce maybe a 10-minute feature. That weekend there was, of course, the tragedy of Ronnie Peterson being killed.

“We came back and the regional bosses said, quite rightly, that it was a short national news story rather than just a few minutes on the regional broadcast. We abandoned our plans and created the news piece. A few of the editors got together some months later and worked out what we could put together from what we did shoot that could be used to create a respectful and dignified story of the weekend. That is what we did. We were on film then – not like the video days where you can just shoot, shoot, shoot – so we had a limited film stock and I think we used just about every frame. We made a half-hour programme which is quite poignant when you think of the weekend when it was filmed. It is called Three Days at Monza and it is still doing the rounds today.

“It contains something that I am quite embarrassed about. Everyone does pieces to camera now, but it wasn’t fashionable back then. But the producer

continued on page 22



Hosting the 1989 Autosport Awards, alongside editor Peter Foubister and McLaren’s Ron Dennis

“Lotus boss Colin Chapman was an unusual character”

Steve Rider

FEATURE



wanted me to do this bit to camera alongside the car in the pitlane at Monza explaining the weird and wonderful thing called ground effect that everyone was talking about. So, I hopped alongside the car as Andretti got out, and there was [chief mechanic] Bob Dance and everyone else there all chuckling away in the background. I had an idea of what I was going to say, and I did it all in one take. I was quite pleased with myself. We watched it back, and instead of talking about the ‘retractable’ skirts on the car, I had spoken about ‘reversible’ skirts. Reversible skirts are something, in those days, my mother used to buy from C&A...! But we didn’t have time to change it so that was left in the final edit.”

MN: What was it like to get to know Colin Chapman, because a lot of people found him to be a bit prickly...?

SR: “To call it an aura would be too grand of a name, but you did feel that you were in the presence of someone who just had ideas spinning off him. He relished every technical aspect and every technical challenge that was presented in Formula 1 – and he was never happier than when his technology was getting him ahead of the game.

“He was generous to us, but on other occasions he could be a bit strange. We went to [Lotus F1 HQ] Ketteringham Hall once ahead of the start of the season and we had made an arrangement to interview him. We were there at 1000hrs on the Monday morning, as arranged, and I went and told the secretary that I was there with the film crew and we were ready to do the piece. She went off to see him and came back down to us and told us that Mr Chapman wasn’t available. I explained we would only be 10 minutes and we had a slot on the regional news to fill that evening and asked her to go back and ask him again. Once more, he said he was unavailable and I explained that I would need a reason to go back to the sports desk and tell them why we hadn’t got the piece. She told us, off the record, that Colin was due to go on holiday to Spain the very next day and he would rather wait a week until he had got back and had a suntan. It was all very bizarre.

“He just exuded that kind of attitude. He was a great guy, but he was also a very complicated man at the same time.”

Question: Just how do you keep so calm in front of camera? There is never



Early career was at the BBC

a hair out of place: do you have a make-up entourage?

Emma Facey

Via email

SR: “I don’t have any kind of entourage in tow. Louise Goodman, our pitlane reporter for the British Touring Car Championship, she has a make-up person with her, but not me. I am all natural.

“If you are doing maybe half-hour studio-based programme maybe people expect you to look all polished and like Peter Andre or something, but if you are doing eight-and-a-half hours of outside broadcast in the wind and the rain, you have to just go with it. It is a good way of getting people’s sympathy.”

MN: And how do you keep so calm?

SR: “Well, it’s only really television isn’t it!? If you want to get all learned and professional about it, I think if you understand the programme that you are presenting technically, which comes to you with a lot of experience, you anticipate just about every problem that is likely to come at you – and that means you have a solution for how you might handle it.”

MN: What is the worst thing that can go wrong?

SR: “There have been a couple of occasions when I have worked with directors – none of them involved with the BTCC – where if anything ever goes wrong with the programme, their immediate reaction is to cut back to the presenter. The poor old presenter gets landed with the whole thing, whereas the proper route would be to cut to a wide-angle shot and let the presenter talk over that.

“The worst thing that happened to me during a broadcast – which also turned out to be the best thing that happened to me – was when I did my first big network thing for ITV which was the Masters Golf in 1982. We were doing it from a studio in London and I was this

little presenter from Anglia who had been brought in to front it. It was in the days of fairly primitive communications. We got to about 2355hrs and the event was building to its dramatic climax, and the producer said he was going to put the studio lights up for a second because there could be a slight interruption on the satellite link for about 30 seconds and they might have to throw back to me. Midnight came and went and everyone relaxed, and then at 0005hrs, the satellite went down.

“We were assuming this was going to be a brief interlude and I was sat there with one of the top golf journalists and we were able to chat for a couple of minutes, and then it became evident that the satellite link wasn’t going to come back. It had gone down when the top players were on the 17th hole. We filled for 45 minutes until we had to go off air. There were no mobile phones then, so we had no idea what was actually going on in America – we eventually came off the air without even being able to tell the viewers who had won. Ian Wooldridge wrote in the Daily Mail the next day that ITV should never again be entrusted with a major sporting event. And that was my debut. ...

“Jonathan Martin, the head of BBC Sport, had been watching and figured that if I could handle that situation, I must be OK. That opened some doors. We started a conversation about me going to the Beeb.”

Question: How easy was it to persuade Grandstand to cover the British Touring Car Championship and British Formula 3 in 1988 [when both championships got most of the rounds shown]? Did you have to push hard?

Steven Nye

Via email

SR: “Yes, we did have to push. I joined the BBC in 1985 and the first edition of

Grandstand I did – in fact, the very first thing I linked in to – was a round of the MG Metro Cup from Silverstone. It had been a round supporting the British Grand Prix the week beforehand. I was all very keen and enthusiastic and was asking what the championship positions were going into that race and how it might affect the bigger picture, but it didn’t seem to matter because it was just that isolated race being broadcast.

“Over the next couple of months, there were quite a few just one-off races that were being shown and I couldn’t really work out the point if there was no narrative to it. It turned out that the BBC had a contract with the circuits and they were obliged to visit these places once a year or so and film: it didn’t seem to matter what was on that race card on any particular day.

“So Murray Walker, Tiff Needell and I got together and sat down with the BBC. We suggested that when the existing contracts ran out, it would be a better idea to do contracts with a championship and, obviously, the main candidates were the British Touring Car Championship and British Formula 3. The BBC said they would love to carry the story line of a title battle through the year, but they didn’t have the hardware or the facilities to do it. We then had to go away and talk to the various owners of the championships and explained to them that there was a will to give the series’ continuous airtime across the year, but they had to come up with the budget to do it to enable Barrie Hinchliffe Productions, as it was then, to come up with the material.

“That proved to be a bit of a battle. There were highs and lows. One solution for raising revenue was the idea of putting these new fangled onboard cameras in the cars. In our innocence, we told those people who had bought an onboard camera that they could put their own sponsors’ names on the dashboard

“We had to stop just showing these isolated races”

Steve Rider



The BTCC really took off on TV in the 1988 season

so it would be in shot. When we got to round one at Silverstone in 1988, we were on the grid with the two-minute board sounding, and the BBC contracts manager looked into the first car he came across, which was Jerry Mahony's Ford Sierra RS500 and it had his backer, Arquati, plastered on the dash. He said the car couldn't compete and there were seconds to go until the green light! There were all sorts of things like that which we were having to deal with.

"I remember getting a memo back in those days from a bigwig saying that three-and-a-half minutes into the coverage, someone had walked in front of the camera with a Camel jacket on. It was that level of scrutiny. What were we supposed to do about that? That was the kind of atmosphere we were trying to progress these things in, but we got there in the end."

Question: How influential was Group A touring car racing in forging your focus on touring car racing? Was Super Touring (or another version of BTCC) better?

Chris Phillips
Via Twitter

MN: Having gone from the Group A origins in the late 1980s through to the NGTC era we have today, which do you look back on most fondly?

SR: "It sounds an obvious thing to say, but I don't think I have enjoyed the championship as much as I have in the last couple of years. We have a great raft of drivers, the regulations are on point and the consistency and solid nature of the championship and its support is fabulous.

"Looking back to the early 1990s, when the class system was dropped, that was another huge turning point for the BTCC. You suddenly had the manufacturers piling in. It was a mad time and completely unsustainable, but to see the likes of Gabriele Tarquini and

Jo Winkelhock coming over really underlined the fact that the championship had totally taken off. It was gratifying to be in that era and to think back to the category just five years before that point and realise that it was probably television that had brought it to that level."

MN: We hope your wages went up commensurately with the drivers at that point Steve...

SR: "My wages were never a point of discussion with the BBC. Never at all, in fact..."

Question: Why do you think the coverage of the British Rally Championship didn't take off when it was on mainstream TV [in the late 1980s] on the BBC like the British Touring Car Championship did?

Gary Jennings
Via email

SR: "It is the old debate about trying to transfer the competitive element of the sport into a television edit. It is something that even now, despite the quality of the coverage and the technology that is piling into the broadcasts of the World Rally Championship, it is still bloody hard to tell the story of how a rally is won.

"What Barrie Hinchliffe had done in the 1970s and 1980s by capturing the characters and generating the first raft of wonderful images from rallying was fantastic film-making but it never had a long-term potential because you couldn't really tell the story behind it.

"I had this conversation with Jonathan Martin, who was head of sport at the BBC, and we did make an attempt at it. It was in the late 1980s when rallying was flying – Tony Pond was getting a huge profile and the RAC Rally was covered by the BBC. Martin said that the only way to make rallying work for the viewers was to be able to explain and show where Driver A is faster than Driver B. He edited Ski Sunday, and he said it had a good template for rallying because

there was a clock running in the corner, there was continuous camera coverage across the course and there were split times throughout each run and you could see who was performing well and who wasn't.

"We went away and we created something called the Mobil 1 Rally Challenge. It was a six-part series and we had six drivers driving identical versions of that year's World Rally cars. We had Stig Blomqvist, Russell Brookes, Jimmy McRae, Malcolm Wilson and so on taking part. It was OK: we packed the whole thing with onboard cameras and covered the whole stage, but it just wasn't rallying.

"That is the difference between rallying and the British Touring Car Championship. It is not just about creating an audience, it is about generating a casual audience. There is nothing to sophisticated to understand in the BTCC – it is a 20-minute race; big start, big crash, big finish and whoever crosses the line first wins. In rallying, I spent 10 years writing rally scripts and trying to create a thread that would be able to explain just what had happened and why and how. But it would always end with Driver X arriving in Harrogate having won by 15 minutes or so."

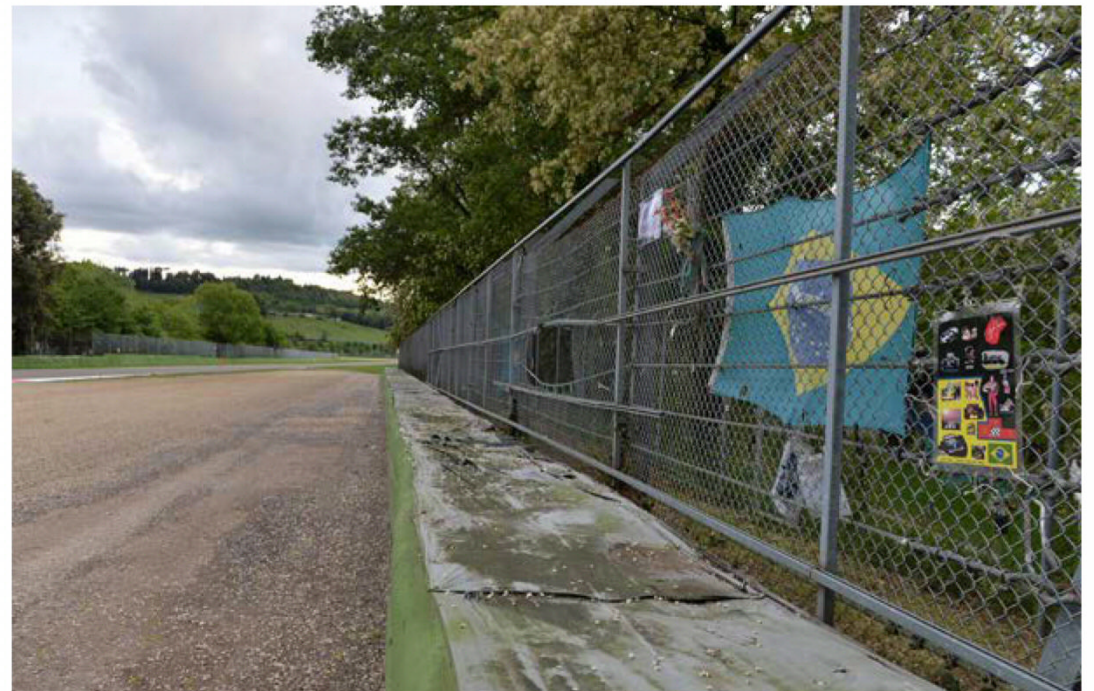
MN: We've always thought of you more as a rally man than a racing man. Are we wrong?

SR: "Rallying really is where I started and that is where I formed a partnership with Barrie Hinchliffe Productions and Barrie himself in particular. Even before I was at the BBC, I was involved with helping him to get stuff on ITV's World of Sport. I had a little bit of a tie-up with Vauxhall and I ended up doing a little bit of co-driving. I call it co-driving: I contributed absolutely nothing..."

"I did the Audi Sport National Rally alongside Pentti Airikkala in 1985 in a Vauxhall Astra GTE, for example. Pentti said it would be great to get me in the car.



Call the experts: Rider works alongside Paul O'Neill and Tim Harvey



Imola in 1994 provided Rider with a extremely tough weekend

He said he didn't expect me to be give too much input but the most important thing was that we had a laugh together. He said the event was just a recce for the RAC Rally later that year and he knew all the stages anyway. He said we could have a real hoot.

"I met up with him in Aberystwyth on the Friday night before the rally and I found him in the hotel bar having a few beers, holding court and regaling everyone with one of his many, many stories. He kept saying it was all about the fun. We went to bed at 0100hrs and we had to meet back downstairs at 0500hrs for the event. When I came down, he was in the corner staring at the wall wrapping paper around his hands and saying 'I think we can win this'. My head was pounding and any thoughts of just having a laugh were out of the window! Once he got in the car, it was game face all the way and he was absolutely sensational. We finished seventh overall and we won the class... it was the start and end of my great motorsport competition career."

MN sets the scene: As the anchor man for Sunday Grandstand on the BBC, Rider was broadcasting the San Marino GP in 1994 when Ayrton Senna suffered his fatal accident at Tamburello. It was one of the darkest days in the sport, and Rider had to convey the latest news to the viewers.

Question: How soon did you know Ayrton Senna had died when you were live on the BBC? Was there a protocol in place for such a moment?

James Hilton

Via email

SR: "There was an atmosphere within half an hour that made you realise that if there was going to be anything positive that could possibly have been said, that opportunity had gone. There wasn't a formal protocol but there was certainly an understanding that while Ayrton had

been moved away from the scene and taken to hospital – fingers crossed and all that stuff – it was quite clear what had happened. There was an unspoken rule – certainly in Italy and in Bernie Ecclestone's day – that no-one dies at the circuit. You get the race run first and you get the fans out, which is probably quite sensible."

MN: But what is it like when you turn up to cover a sports event and all of a sudden it turns into a global news story? It must be mind-blowing...

SR: "You are sort-of prepared for that with motor racing – maybe more so in those days than now. But others have been through greater tests of their professional presenting skills. I am more than grateful that I wasn't at Hillsborough or Heysel or anywhere like that.

"At Imola, we knew mid-afternoon and we had already made plans to abandon that evening's grand prix highlights and do a special tribute programme. Murray Walker was brilliant, naturally. But it had been a weird weekend anyway, even before that. The BBC was getting its pound of flesh out of me because on the Saturday before the San Marino Grand Prix, I had been at Wembley covering the Rugby League Challenge Cup Final. We got a call at about 1000hrs, before we went on air, from the Simtek team asking whether I was going out to Imola. They needed a suspension part taken out there and they were going to give it to me to take through as hand baggage. This guy turned up with this parcel for me to take. An hour after that, we were giving the news that Simtek's Roland Ratzenberger had been killed at Imola..."

Question: Do you think motorsport should be available to free-to-air broadcasting again?

@AutoTradition
Via Twitter

MN: Lots of motorsport is free-to-air,

continued on page 24

FEATURE



Rider was involved with Formula 1's production on ITV in 1997



Rising stars: Rider with Lewis Hamilton at the Autosport Awards



On the frontline: Rider tackles multiple BTCC champ Colin Turkington

but Formula 1 isn't. Do you think that is a problem for the sport as a whole?

SR: "Ten years ago I remember looking at the landscape and you could chart the way free-to-air Formula 1 coverage was going. There was an inevitability to it – and it was a question of the free-to-air broadcasters just trying to salvage as much as was physically possible."

"I think that opportunity has gone now. Of course, in a perfect world, all motorsport would be free for everyone to watch but you have to ask how the bills get paid if you do that. I remember when the BBC lost the Formula 1 contract in 1996, it was an absolute bolt from the blue. We had absolutely no idea it was coming – we had no idea any other broadcaster would be remotely interested..."

MN: But wasn't Bernie Ecclestone pulling strings in the background of that deal?

SR: "Bernie put a call into Jonathan Martin at the BBC. I can't remember the figures off the top of my head, but I think the BBC had been paying, say, £20 million for a three-year deal. Whatever it was, ITV came in with four times that amount. There was no negotiation. Bernie contacted Jonathan and told him that unless he had been pulling the wool over Mr Ecclestone's eyes, there was no way he could match what ITV had offered so thanks very much and goodbye."

"With Jonathan Martin's blessing, I then became part of a team that put together a bid for the production rights of what ITV was going to do. It was my old employers Anglia TV who contacted me and wanted to put together a consortium to bid for the rights. I went up there for a couple of meetings in Norwich and we got this bloke down from King's Lynn called Martin Brundle and we started knocking up

some ideas. That grew into something which Chrysalis Production got involved with and we won the contract. There I was, a BBC presenter, right in the middle of it all, which was a bit awkward."

"I went back to the head of sport at the Beeb because I had the chance [to stay in F1]. We had a couple of meetings – Brian Barwick was the head of sport at the time – and he explained to me that there were lots of good things happening at the BBC and the Olympics was coming up and it had my name on it that I really should stay. He convinced me that the only environment to be in for sports broadcasting was the BBC and I the end I stayed with them. Three months later, Barwick went to ITV..."

"At the BBC, working with Murray Walker and James Hunt was fantastic but the BBC were never – and couldn't really ever be – wholeheartedly committed to the packaging of Formula 1 in the same way that ITV were. ITV really invented the shape of the Sky Sports F1 coverage you see today. There was an element that the BBC had its hands tied because it was using licence payers' money but also Formula 1 was a component of Grandstand, and Grandstand was a multi-sport programme. The occasion that we were broadcasting live from Imola in 1994 was purely coincidental. It was just an opportunity to link the programme from trackside, which actually was a very, very rare thing for the BBC. On other occasions I would put Grandstand on air at 1325hrs, fill up until the cars were coming around on the warming up lap and hand over to Murray and James. We would leave the race after about 15 laps to show some Sunday cricket and then return for the closing stages. You look back on that now with horror, but that was the way it was..."

Question: What are your favourite memories of the British Touring Car Championship and why?

Andrew Rankin
Via Facebook

SR: "There was the big Tim Harvey-Steve Soper-John Cleland thing at the end of 1992 at Silverstone which I suppose was the high-water mark that made us all realise that there was a TV product there with all the right kind of chemistry. Especially working with Tim now, the climax to that season is always a fond memory. I remember getting the three drivers together for TV about 20 years later at Goodwood. I didn't even introduce them I just said 'so, whose fault was it?' Off they all went, defending their positions and this was two decades later! It was wonderful stuff."

"I don't want to be cute, but probably the best memory would be going to a race meeting in the late 1980s at Thruxton or Brands Hatch or wherever and you would come away with a certain impression of how the meeting was. We had this edit suite in Fitzroy Square in London and at about 1600hrs on a Monday afternoon, we would be sitting there with a pile of about 80 tapes trying to sort through exactly how the shape of the race was going to come together. It was a heck of a job – a ridiculous operation when you look back on it. But we would see how this particular camera had caught an incident or how that one had caught it. And you would stitch it all together and watch through it and just think 'wow'. Those were the really satisfying times. You were watching the race come alive again in front of you – or not, on a very few occasions..."

MN: Does [BTCC chief executive] Alan Gow have much input into the coverage?



On the frontline with ITV during the 2006 F1 season

SR: “Not that I am aware of. That question is really for the producer and the team, but not as far as I am concerned, no. I think the great thing is with the BTCC – and which doesn’t happen in other sports – is that everyone is on the same side. The production company and the BTCC bosses, everyone is on the same page and everyone has the same objective.”

MN: Going back to your favourite memories, Steve, one we couldn’t resist asking about was when you got behind the controls of a pukka BTCC car in 1998?

SR: “It was Rickard Rydell’s Volvo S40 and I maintain that there must have been some kind of suspension failure.

“It was probably something that you wouldn’t be allowed to do now: particularly on the Saturday of a race weekend just before qualifying. I think Rydell was a bit confused about whether I was going to drive it or not. He hopped out of the car and Charlie Cox [former BTCC racer and commentator] jumped into the passenger seat. There was only one place left for me... the cockpit. I was a bit out of my depth – I had never seen a sequential gearbox in my life before that. Off we went, and Charlie

wasn’t able to offer me much assistance.

“I still had some bits from that car which we auctioned off for charity. All I did was end up in the gravel, which took them about 19 hours to Hoover out. I was quite pleased to get through the first lap – I am not that bad a driver, I thought – but it went a bit awry when we got to Clearways at the end of lap two.

“Everyone remembers that, but what they don’t know about is that Vauxhall offered me the chance to drive its Vectra after that. We went down to Pembrey and I did about 40 laps in that thing without putting a foot wrong. The big lesson is that if you are going to do these kinds of things do them in private.”

Question: *Have you ever been presented with a celebrity to do the reverse-grid draw for race three in the BTCC [shown during the live coverage on Sunday afternoon] and not know who they were? For example, are you a dedicated watcher of the soaps?*

David Weatherley

Via email

SR: “I will admit to not avidly watching soap operas. There was a very nice lady who is in Emmerdale who came along to do the draw at one round, but I had no

idea who she was. There are some obvious questions you can ask – how excited are they about the racing they’ve seen? Do they like motorsport? Etc. You’ve normally got enough time to hook into some little project they’ve got going on or something like that.

“I have had a few strange ones where you wonder what their route was to get to the position to be performing that role. A couple of years ago they shoved this guy in front of me and I asked who he was, and all they said was that he had a new cookery book out... I wasn’t really left with much room to go with that one.”

Question: *Were your interviews on the Autosport Awards stage, which you hosted for 28 years, scripted? I still watch Sebastian Vettel’s impression of Kimi Raikkonen in 2011 and howl with laughter...*

Damien Doherty

Via email

SR: “Not at all. They used to be wonderful evenings and they were all ad hoc – although I think Christian Horner might have given me a call a couple of times to tell me he was going to have a go about this, that

or the other for a bit of a laugh.

“It was all as it was delivered in the main. The great thing about those awards was the atmosphere: it wasn’t the FIA gala or anything that was particularly up itself, it was a really good end-of-season get together not just for F1, but for the whole of motorsport. The doors were shut, and people could tell a few stories and have a joke and there was no formality to it.”

Question: *Who have you been most over-awed by meeting? Has there been any driver who has made you pinch yourself that you are interviewing them?*

Jason Inglis

Via email

SR: “Ayrton Senna was special. I always likened him a little bit to golfer Seve Ballesteros. There was an aura. Senna had this thing where no matter what question you asked him, he would answer it as if it was the meaning of life, and that is what Seve did too. You would feel humbled by that because they guy was taking an interest and getting involved – he wasn’t just doing another interview.

“In the early days when I was working a lot with Mario Andretti and Lotus, Mario was just ‘wow’. I was lucky enough to go and spend a day with him when Sky was doing its Legends of F1 series. I went over to Nazareth, to his place. We were sitting there in Mario’s own sports bar and tell all the stories – some of which had never been broadcast. But as well as his legend, he is just a great, great storyteller.

“That Legends series was special, and I did one of the last interviews ever with Sir Jack Brabham. That was one heck of a privilege. That series gave us a feeling of – without wanting to sound pompous – the history and heritage of the sport. I

have linked together with a very good researcher, Richard Wiseman, and a couple of other the producers who worked on that series, to set up a company which is now pretty deep into researching the F1 material which exists of races before 1980 and going right back to the first World championship grand prix in 1950. Our object is to make sure that the races that the BBC has, or the European Broadcasting Union, are somehow preserved and saved from the rubbish tip. It is a symptom of being involved with the broadcasting industry for so long that I just want to make sure that the footage is not only preserved, but available for people to use.

“We have found about 60 or 70 races that the BBC didn’t realise that they had. The plan is to compile it into a self-contained archive to create a one-stop shortcut for future researchers. The common-sense approach would be that Formula One Management will recognise the need for Formula 1 to have a complete archive of the World championship. FOM is doing some great stuff at the moment of organising the archive that they have post 1980 but the first 30 years of the championship are a bit harder.”

Question: *If you, Paul O’Neill, Tim Harvey and David Addison [the ITV4 BTCC crew and commentators] had a race, how would it end?*

@Cinera

Via Twitter

SR: “I think David Addison would win in any circumstances because he takes things far too seriously!

“Given my previous experience, I would probably be in the gravel trap on lap one. I think Paul O’Neill would probably take Tim off, giving Addison a clear run.” ■

“We soon realised that the BTCC was a TV product”

Steve Rider



It wasn’t only racing drivers: Rider and actor James Garner in 2001

REPORT

IN BRIEF

Cadwell climax

Barry Morris took the advantage in the MN Circuit Rally Championship title fight after Neil Roskell's misfortune but, with one dropped score to take into account for all drivers, the situation is closer than headline totals suggest. The four points Roskell salvaged would be removed, while Morris stands to lose 18 from his tally, switching an eight-point lead back to a swing of six in favour of Roskell with one round remaining. Martin Hodgson and Alex Cannon remain outsiders.

O'Donovan's plans

Ollie O'Donovan was finally rewarded for his strong showings in recent MN Circuit rallies this season with a top-five finish for himself and co-driver Ashleigh Morris at Donington. O'Donovan, running a Hyundai R5 and briefly a Ford Fiesta since the third event of the season in December, intends to run the final round at Cadwell Park, and is looking at a full entry next season. He said: "I don't see why not. We've been really enjoying it, so I'd like to look at going for a full season next year."

More for Metro

One of the star showings from the recent MNCRC event at Donington Park was that of the striking MG Metro 6R4 of Mark Jasper and Don Whyatt, competing in its second rally of the season ahead of a wider project. "It's exciting for us", said Jasper, looking at off-road rallies in the future. "I've driven 6R4s for 20 years now. It's been steady so far; we had a few little problems, but it feels good. We're using the circuits as a test run really to see where we are at with it, and then I'd like to enter it into a few off-road rallies such as the Jim Clark."

Tointon's return

James Tointon made a long-awaited return to motorsport, after 31 years away from the driving seat. Tointon shared an eye-catching classic Austin Mini and survived a chicane-related time penalty to recover to 38th place with co-driver Gary Dixon in the A Series machine. "I hadn't rallied for over 31 years, but then lockdown happened. I had my old-fashioned engine with a 16-valve cylinder on it, and here we are," he said. "I'm obviously a bit rusty, but I've really enjoyed it." Hopeful of running the Mini at events including the Cadwell finale, Tointon pleaded for a co-driver to come forward for future rallies.



Henderson was the form man throughout

HENDERSON KEEPS HOLD OF THE WINNING FEELING

Dan Mason watched the Fiesta man mine his rich vein of current form

David Henderson made it two MN Circuit Rally Championship wins in quick succession in a dramatic Dukeries event at Donington Park, as the series leaders hit trouble.

The penultimate rally of the season could have decided the fate of the championship with just one visit to Cadwell Park left to settle it. Neil Roskell and Andrew Roughead's consistency had put the former within reach of sealing the crown early at the Leicestershire circuit.

Dramas for his main rival Barry Morris at both Brands Hatch and Snetterton had put Roskell in the driving seat for a maiden crown, although he would have to rely on further misfortune for his Darrian competitor to amass the points required to put himself out of reach.

And he had another obstacle firmly in his way in an in-form Henderson, who had romped to victory in the previous round at Snetterton to christen his own Ford Fiesta R5's MNCRC debut in style.

Former circuit racer Henderson would start behind Roskell in the seeding at Donington, but he was quick to press on with his attempts to reverse those roles on a damp circuit in the morning stages. It was a case of 'when' conditions would be adequate enough for slick tyres rather than 'if' as drivers took to what proved a treacherous opening stage in the toughest of the day's conditions.

The Fiesta drivers up top were embroiled in a mental game of second guessing when

it came down to the choice of compound. "That was tricky," was Roskell's initial verdict after keeping his Fiesta within four seconds of the flying Henderson, both surviving some seat-of-the-pants moments on their first run. "I think we're nearly ready for slicks though."

That wish for the field looked to be coming true on the second stage of the morning, but it would be only Henderson up front who blinked and attached a soft set of slicks to the lead car. The result would take its time to reap rewards, but his lead grew to 13 seconds.

"It was a tricky first stage," said Henderson. "We put soft slicks on for stage two and they were struggling, but then as it went on, they started to come in and I think the others; their tyres started to get away."

With the nervy phase now a distant memory, Henderson – much like at Snetterton – started to show his increasing confidence in the Fiesta up front. Behind, Roskell was soon looking over his shoulder more often as the snarling group behind began to make a move onto his tail.

Losing time in traffic left him under threat from double podium-finisher John Griffiths in the Ford battle, with the Darrian of Morris joining in after an initially careful start to the rally. A rubber band effect was in play, the trio entering the fourth stage of the day covered by only one second.

Just as the rally was settling into a narrative, a sudden plot twist had its effect on the championship fight, as Roskell slowed to crawl with smoke coming from the Fiesta. The culprit was head gasket-related, and soaring engine temperatures



Points leader Neil Roskell suffered a cruel blow in his hunt for the title

posed too big a risk as the pair limped through the not-so-aptly named flying finish for a diagnosis.

Out of contention, Roskell braved the fifth stage in the afternoon in a bid to assess the magnitude of the issue, but it would be to no avail as he ground to a halt with overheating on the pitstraight, which prompted his first non-finish after five consecutive podium results.

"It's devastating," said the series leader,

already thinking of the North West Stages and Cadwell finale. "We'd just started to up our game and we came around the infield absolutely flying. Then the next thing you know, temperatures are going through the roof and we were coasting it home."

The change in fortune had finally come the way of Morris, who moved into second place overall to further increase his chances of defending the crown and split the Fords of Henderson and Griffiths.

Photos: SMJ Photography



Barry Morris is now top of the standings



Ollie O'Donovan scored an encouraging fifth-placed finish in his Hyundai

CLASSES



Josh Payton was in spectacular form in his Escort to win the class

PAYTON BANISHES THE BAD MEMORIES TO WIN

The previous visit to Donington Park proved one to forget for Josh Payton and Jamie Vaughan. Fast forward three months however, and the Ford Escort pairing were back on top form with a dominant Class C victory.

It was the fourth win in six rallies for the defending class champions, on a rally that fell away from their Escort rival Phillip House who endured a catalogue of misfortune. Ryan Connolly's luck appeared to be changing, finishing second overall in his Ford Puma. A cracked exhaust put House on the back foot after stage two, then a late retirement played into the

hands of Lucy Wigley who snatched the class points lead - the three covered by 12 points with 30 left on the table.

James Hardy added win number four of his season in Class A. The Nissan Micra squabble had the addition of Adam Ripper's entry for distraction, and on this occasion it was able to split the title fight between an otherwise dominant Hardy and Kay Thompson, Hardy beating Ripper by 57 seconds.

Alex Cannon's fabulous run of form in Class B was halted momentarily by his persistent rival Ben Wilkinson. Peugeot 106 Maxi Wilkinson man put down an early

marker and briefly rose as high as 17th overall as he streaked clear of the Ford Fiesta of Cannon.

Barry Morris dominated Class D with second overall, recovering the edge in the fight over Martin Hodgson who again shone as he battled Payton for seventh.

David Henderson, of course, could also add the E2 class spoils to his list of Donington achievements, while Nick and Crispin Williamson (Mitsubishi Lancer) added yet another victory to their Class E1 tally. Chris Cleghorn's Ford Escort clinched Class H while Mazda MX-5 honours went to Stephen Johansen.

By the time the final two stages had arrived, Henderson looked in a comfortable position. He was now 31s clear of his new opposition and feeling more and more confident behind the wheel.

Another strong run ensured he extended his stage-winning run to six from six, with a double triumph getting ever closer for himself and for experienced co-driver, Sion Cunliffe. Although matched for times on the final stage by Andy Scott, Henderson made no mistake and confirmed a second consecutive MNCRC win for the pair, 38s clear of Morris.

"The stages in the afternoon maybe suited the Darrian more," said Henderson, "but it turned out to be fine and there were no dramas. I gave myself a target to be quickest on them all, and we managed to do just that."

Second place was still crucial for Morris, grabbing the championship lead back without dropped scores taken into account ahead of next month's season finale.

Despite the setback, Roskell - victorious last time the series visited Cadwell - remained optimistic. "Barry was getting faster which I think I expected here, but I'm looking forward to Cadwell Park now," he said. "I like it there, we won last time, and hopefully it rains [and I will be in the hunt]."

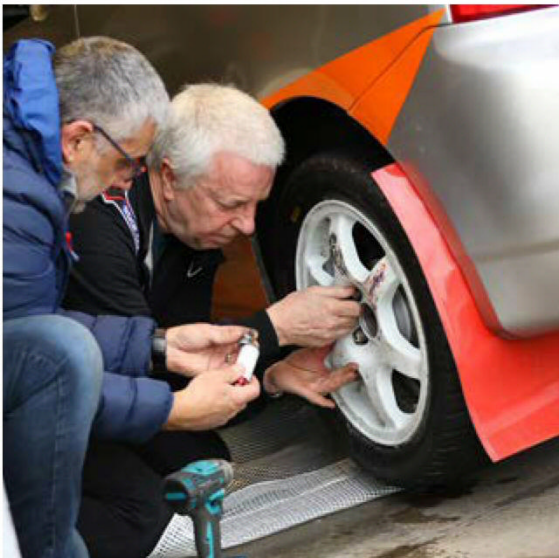
Griffiths continued his strong form with yet another podium, although rallycrosser Scott came within two seconds of denying him after showing

rapid pace in the closing stages. Fifth place went the way of another rallycross man in Ollie O'Donovan, who this time would see his pace rewarded with a finish after bad luck denied him at Brands Hatch and Snetterton.

A standout performance was that of Mark Jasper in the MG Metro 6R4. On its second rally of the season, the nostalgic machine reached the top six, beating the flying Ford Escort Mk2s of Josh Payton and Martin Hodgson. Ford completed the top 10 with another brace of Fiestas, Paul Murro backing up a strong Snetterton with ninth ahead of Darrell Taylor.

RESULTS			
Dukeries Rally			
Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship: Round 6			
POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	David Henderson/Sion Cunliffe	Ford Fiesta R5	51m10s
2	Barry Morris/Tom Hutchings	Darrian T90 GTR	+38s
3	John Griffiths/Nigel Wetton	Ford Fiesta R5	+48s
4	Andy Scott/Laura Connell	Fiesta S2000	+50s
5	Ollie O'Donovan/Ashleigh Morris	Hyundai R5	+1m18s
6	Mark Jasper/Don Whyatt	MG Metro 6R4	+2m01s
7	Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m03s
8	Martin Hodgson/Tony Jones	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m17s
9	Paul Murro/Callum Cross	Ford Fiesta R5	+2m21s
10	Darrell Taylor/Dylan Thomas	Ford Fiesta R2	+2m49s

Class winners: Henderson/Cunliffe; Morris/Hutchings; Payton/Vaughan; Hodgson/Jones; Ben Wilkinson/Andrew Wilkinson (Peugeot 106 Maxi); Nick Williamson/Crispin Williamson (Mitsubishi Lancer E5); Stephen Johansen/Colin Stephens (Mazda MX-5); James Hardy/Adrian Hardy (Nissan Micra); Chris Cleghorn/Ken Bills (Ford Escort RS1800).



Tyre selection would prove crucial



Friends and enemies: The action was frantic at Donington Park



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COLUMNIST

MATT JAMES



Crunching the numbers can tell you who the BTCC top dog is

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Shedden is the best all-rounder



Ingram: Top dog at Silverstone

You wouldn't think it if you stood trackside, but the British Touring Car Championship can be about playing the percentages. It isn't all bumper-crunching and elbowing other cars out of the way – certainly not for the headline drivers.

There is the age-old balancing act between front-wheel drive and rear-wheel drive. Some circuits suit the rear-motivated cars while others are more suitable for front-wheel-drive machines.

But there is another factor that can make a huge difference, and that is the drivers. We've crunched the numbers and worked out, over the last 15 race finishes at each circuit, which drivers have aced particular circuits. The results are fascinating.

The most successful driver across the board is Gordon Shedden. While he has spent all of the five seasons this covers in a front-line front-wheel-drive car – whereas not all of the others have – he is the most consistent performer over each of the nine venues we have looked at. The Team Dynamics driver is best at Brands Hatch Indy (with an average finish of 5.46), Donington Park National (5.29) and Oulton Park (3.80) (traditionally thought of as a rear-wheel-drive track). Shedden is also in

the top three at four other venues.

Unsurprisingly, he is pleased with the outcome and the three-time title winner knows it is making the most of the key circuits that can bring the big differences in terms of points collected.

He says: "With experience in the championship, you realise that some circuits suit certain cars. That is a fact, it is not opinion. I think over the years, we have ended up making the Honda Civic Type R pretty good everywhere. It might not be stellar at a particular circuit, but it will not be horrendous at another either. We are there or thereabouts everywhere, and that is why the car has had so much success over the years.

"If you look at the statistics, it is borne out because at Croft and Knockhill, which are traditionally rear-wheel-drive circuits, I am third in the averages and they are supposedly tracks that might not suit the Honda so well. So even the weekends where we might not expect to dominate due to the nature of the tracks, we are able to keep a strong points tally ticking over.

"You know where your strengths are and you know you have a car good enough to win, then you throw the kitchen sink at it. If you are at a track where your car might only be good enough for seventh or eighth, then you need to make sure you take the absolute maximum

from it and don't finish any further back."

The only blot on Shedden's card is at Snetterton. The Norfolk track has generally been unkind to him – including getting kicked out of pole position for a rear-wing infringement last season, forcing him to race from the back all weekend.

Four-time title winner Colin Turkington is known as the King of Croft, and the statistics confirm this – he has an average finishing position in North Yorkshire of 3.77, while he is top at Knockhill too, although reigning champion Ash Sutton pushes him hard in Scotland. The majority of those two's results have been banked in rear-wheel-drive cars. Turkington is also heading the statistics at Snetterton too, with an average of 4.43.

Crucially, though, Sutton himself is only top of the averages at one venue, and it is right at the business end of the season on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix layout. There he clocks a 4.71 average. His rival for the crown in 2021, Turkington, is lagging in fourth place at Brands Hatch with an average of 9.23. So, when the title is on the line, the smart money will always go on Sutton striking hard in Kent.

With five wins from the last 12 visits to Thruxton, it is no surprise that Josh Cook is top of the rankings at the Hampshire speedbowl. The only other circuit to feature a different driver at the top of the charts is Silverstone National, where Tom Ingram's average finish is 4.58 – just under three places better than second-placed driver Turkington. It makes Ingram the most dominant one-circuit dominator.

Of course, statistics can be read in any way to make the result that any person wants to take from them, but there are some lessons to be learned here. The split across the season gives a slight edge to front-wheel-drive cars – six tracks to four – and if you were a gambler, the smart money should be laid on Shedden for a fourth crown in 2022. If only things were that simple...



Thruxton expert Josh Cook is impressive

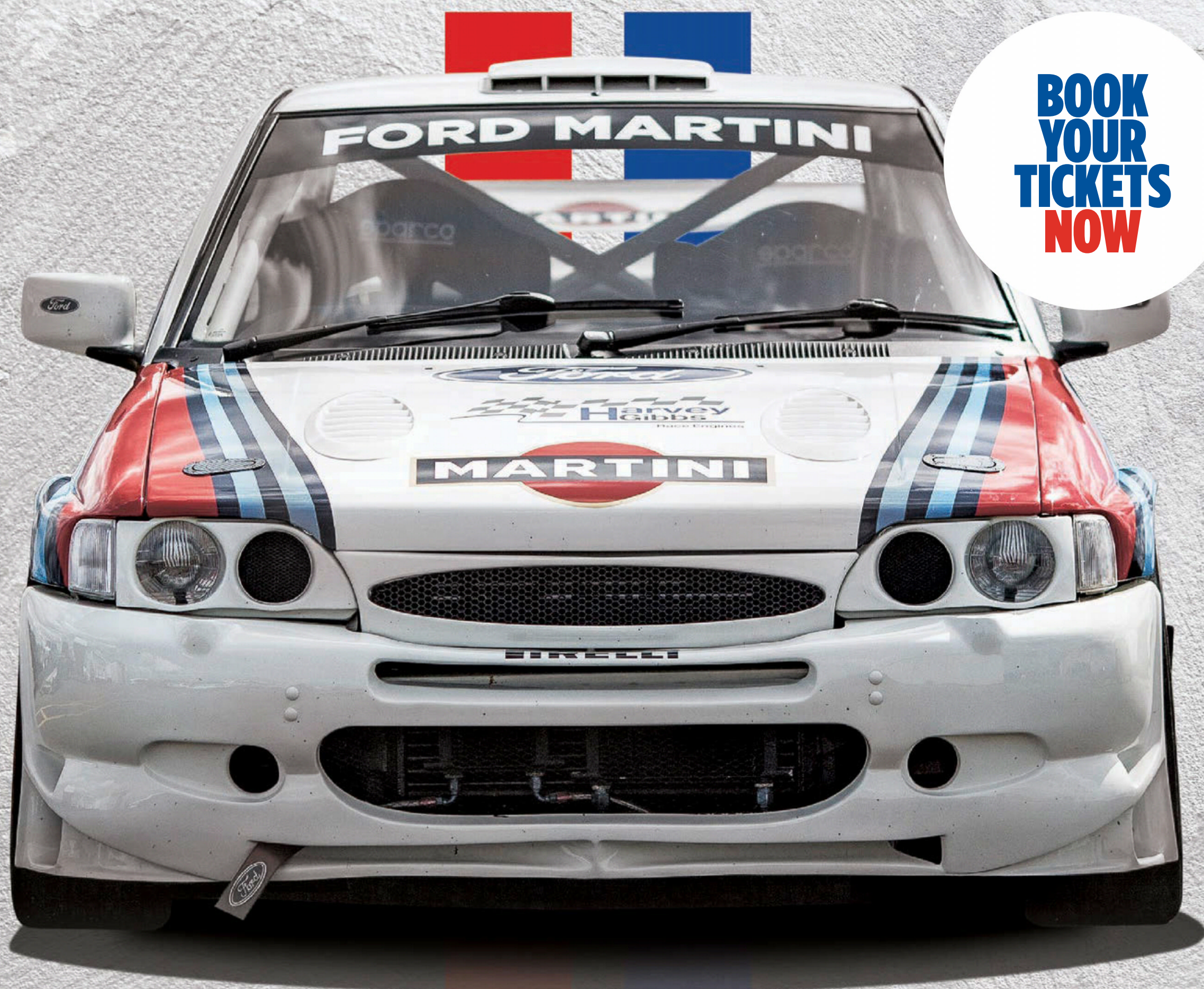


Shedden knows it is about taking the chances

"Drivers know that they have to maximise the circuits where they are strong"



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RALLY REPORTS

BTRDA RALLY SERIES: MALCOLM WILSON RALLY MARCH 12

PETCH LAYS DOWN A BTRDA MARKER

Ford Fiesta Rally2 man opens the season with a controlled driver for glory. By Simon Gronow

Photos: Chicane Media



Ian Bainbridge's Skoda collected a second-place finish



Stephen Petch was in command

Not even the wet and slippery conditions could dampen the spirits of 2017 Gold Star champions Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson, who returned to the BTRDA Rally Series in style by winning the Malcolm Wilson Rally in their Ford Fiesta Rally2.

In a career-best BTRDA finish of second place, Ian Bainbridge/Will Atkins kept the pressure on Petch during the day. They set a couple of fastest times in the process while, further down the order, a quick final stage promoted Jock Armstrong/Tom Woodburn to the final podium spot in their Skodaru Impreza. After leaving the start at M-Sport's HQ in Cumbria, the crews faced four stages before the first service. Petch headed the field in the short Hobcarton test, sharing quickest time with Mark Donnelly, with fellow Fiesta crews Rory Young/Alan Cathers and Perry Gardener/Jack Bowen just one second behind. In the following five-and-a-half mile run through Comb, Armstrong was quickest ahead of Elliott Payne/Patrick Walsh, despite the former struggling with the paddleshift of the Skodaru Impreza at times. Petch made a decisive move in Wythop with another fastest time, which he repeated on the longest

stage of the first loop in Greystoke to arrive in service with a 14-second lead. "Its been slippery, but alright," reflected the leader, who was using a Fiesta Rally2 for the first time. "[The car's] as quick [as my previous Ford Fiesta WRC] but doesn't chuck you about." Going into stage four in Greystoke, Payne was just two seconds behind Petch but a broken suspension sidelined his similar Ford Fiesta Rally2. That promoted Scottish visitor Young to second. The driver said he had found the stages slippery. In an impressive third place was Gardener, who was only using his Fiesta R5 for the third time, with a misted-up windscreen being his only issue. Bainbridge, who had lost time with a brief off in Greystoke, tied with Armstrong in fourth. Just four seconds behind Armstrong were Arron Newby/Jamie Edwards, who had changed a flat tyre after stage two. They then found Greystoke to their liking and their Skoda was just one second slower than Petch. Russ Thompson/Stephen Link dropped out of the top 10 when their Mitsubishi suffered a puncture, while Donnelly had also retired from the event. Two tests followed in Grizedale, which were the longest at almost eight and 11 miles respectively. Petch set another fastest time on

the first, nine seconds up on the level Armstrong and Gardener, who were fighting for third place. Holding a comfortable lead, Petch was taking no chances and opted for a steady approach through the longer Grizedale North test. "We're still here," he said at the following service halt. "It's just tricky, the conditions are so changeable, the car is new to me and it's more slippery than normal." And while his lead had reduced, it was still a healthy 19s. Young stopped on stage five and so the runners-up spot was up for grabs as there were just five seconds separating second from fourth. Bainbridge staked his claim for second place with fastest time through Grizedale North, stage six. "I loved Grizedale, that was so much fun, just a bit lairy in places," Bainbridge admitted as he was five seconds quicker than Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear who were out in their new Ford Fiesta R5. "We got into a rhythm there," said Dear, as they moved into sixth position as they got used to their new R5. A return to Greystoke rounded off the day, and it was the Skodas that performed best with Bainbridge and Newby sharing the fastest time, enabling Bainbridge to secure second place. "It's come good on the last

couple of stages, I've got to be pleased with that," he beamed. For Petch, fourth-fastest time ensured he took victory on his maiden outing in his new Fiesta. "[It is] my first finish with the car, on the top of the podium, I can't complain," said a delighted winner. Changing to harder tyres helped Armstrong to set third-fastest time, the Skodaru driver now understanding the paddleshift a lot better. As a result, he moved up a place, demoting Gardener to fourth, though the Fiesta driver should be pleased with his pace in his new car. Richard Hill/Pat Cooper had a problem-free run in their Mitsubishi Lancer E9, and they particularly enjoyed the Grizedale tests as they finished a fine fifth among the R5 cars. Meanwhile, Hirst dropped time with a puncture after clipping a bank, but held onto sixth ahead of Newby, and a good afternoon enabled Thompson to pull back to eighth. After curing an early misfire, Tom Llewellyn/Ross Whittock also had a better afternoon, some new tyres helping on their Mitsubishi Mirage, as Ian Joel/Graeme Wood rounded off the top 10 in their Escort Cosworth. Meanwhile, road penalties cost Jordan and Paul Hone's Ford Fiesta R5 a top-six finish.

RESULTS				
BTRDA Rally Series, round 1/8 Malcolm Wilson Rally				
POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME	
1	Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson	Ford Fiesta Rally2	49m 00ss	
2	Ian Bainbridge/Will Atkins	Skoda Fabia R5	+16s	
3	Jock Armstrong/Tom Woodburn	Skodaru Impreza	+23s	
4	Perry Gardener/Jack Bowen	Ford Fiesta R5	+24s	
5	Richard Hill/Pat Cooper	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+47s	
6	Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear	Ford Fiesta R5	+52s	
7	Arron Newby/Jamie Edwards	Skoda Fabia R5	+1m 01s	
8	Russ Thompson/Stephen Link	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+1m 24s	
9	Tom Llewellyn/Ross Whittock	Mitsubishi Mirage	+1m 26s	
10	Ian Joel/Graeme Wood	Ford Escort Cosworth	+1m 36s	
Class winners: RF 1.4: Lewis Hooper/Steven Brown (Nissan Micra); RF 2.0: Gordon Davies/Tina Horsefield (Mini Cooper); 1400s: Gary Scott/James Hedges (Proton Satria); 1400C: Alfie Hammond/Peter Williams (Nissan Micra); R2: Yaniv Bar/Osian Owen (Ford Fiesta R2); B10: Barry Lindsay/Caroline Lodge (Peugeot 206); B11: Neil Wearden/Trevor Agnew (Hyundai i20 F2); B12: David Crossen/Aileen Kelly (Ford Escort Mk2); B13: Armstrong/Woodburn; B14: Petch/Wilkinson; H1/2: Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson (Ford Escort Mk2); H3: Sacha Kakad/James Aldridge (Ford Escort Mk2).				



Richard Hill had a problem-free run for fifth position

CLASS ROUND-UP



Crossen and Kelly headed the B12 class runners

Hooper and Brown top the RF 1.4 forest battlers

Following a problem-free run, Lewis Hooper/Steven Brown were first of the RF1.4 runners home in their Nissan Micra. They beat all of the other 1400cc class winners in the process. On his first rally since 2009, Gary Scott, partnered by James Hedges, won the 1400s class in their Proton Satria. The

runners-up were Edward James/Charlie Mason, who had overcome early wheel-bearing issues with their Nissan Micra. Rallying in the UK for the first time, Israeli driver Yaniv Bar had a brilliant run as he and Osian Owen won the R2 class in their Ford Fiesta ahead of Matt Cotton, who was grateful for the help of the spectating Matt

Edwards who helped get his Peugeot 208 back on the road after going off (in spectacular style) on Grizedale North. First of the Ford Escort Mk2 crews home were David Crossen/Aileen Kelly, who won class B12. Stuart Egglestone/Brian Hodgson were first of the Historic runners in their Pinto-engined Ford Escort,

with Sacha Kakad/James Aldridge beating Hugh Hunter/Rob Fagg to the H3 win by just two seconds. Despite a day-long misfire and a couple of overshoots, Neal Wearden/Trevor Agnew won class B11 in their Hyundai as Barry Lindsay/Caroline Lodge took the B10 class in their Peugeot 206.

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- Motorsport News focuses on all that is great about British motorsport, from grassroots to the top flight.



Russian driver and Barwell entry in limbo after Ukraine invasion leads to Motorsport UK ban

MACHITSKI BRITISH GT TITLE DEFENCE DOUBT AFTER RUSSIA BAN



By Graham Kellish
Reigning British GT champions Leo Machitski and Dennis Lind's title defence has been thrown into doubt after Motorsport UK banned Russian and Belarusian-licensed drivers from UK competition. The UK governing body's move, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, goes beyond the FIA's that only requires participation under a neutral flag. Amateur driver Machitski has a Russian licence, which he is now unable to compete with in the UK, though he holds a British passport, grew up in London, and has dual citizenship. He is entered to defend his British GT championship this year, remaining in a Barwell Lamborghini with Lind, and their entry fee is paid. Machitski could in theory race with a non-Russian licence. Machitski is currently in Moscow, his main place of residence, and it is also unclear whether he would be able to travel to the UK, or indeed the extent he would be inclined to do so amid current circumstances. Full story, page 4

RETRO
HOW TO LEAVE A ONE-MAKE MARK
We look at single-marque UK racing, p34

MN POLL!
THE STAR CARS ON THE RALLY STAGES
Help us pick out the most-loved machines p58

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RACING REPORTS

Photos: Steve Jones

SILVERSTONE: BARC BY GRAHAM KEILLOH MARCH 12-13



Frost's Lambo rose to quickly build BEC lead



Lee/Hizzey (74) beat huge Trophy field



Hall ran away in tricky conditions in second Praga race

KHERA AND FROST TAKE FIRST BRITISH ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

Two familiar names won the first race of Britcar’s newly monikered British Endurance Championship, as Lucky Khera and Lee Frost dominated the three-hour encounter in their Lamborghini Huracan. Frost, from starting ninth, shot to first place on Lap 1 and the Huracan never lost the net lead from there. “I was on a mission from the start,” Frost told Motorsport News. “Couldn’t have gone better. “It can go wrong quite easily in a three-hour race, and nothing went wrong. Credit to the team really.” They faced a strong challenge though from Wayne Marrs and Tom Jackson’s Rob Boston Racing Mercedes GT3, which got onto their tail despite starting

last after missing the call to join the grid. However the Mercedes picked up a pitlane speeding penalty then retired with alternator failure. Meanwhile reigning champion Motus One McLaren GT3 pair Dave Scaramanga and Will Powell didn’t start due a broken steering rack sustained in qualifying. Mark Lee and Owen Hizzey won the opening Britcar Trophy race in their SVG Motorsport Ginetta G56A. Lee shadowed leader Nigel Greensall’s BMW E36 in the opening stint then Hizzey passed Greensall’s partner David Gooding just after the pitstops. Khera and Frost finished second, this time in an E36. Hizzey and Lee looked set to double up in Race 2, but a safety

car during the pit window, deployed after they had pitted, jumbled matters. Ginetta GT Academy hopeful Sebastian Debois – in his first race weekend – pitted under the caution then effectively gained a lap when his G55A was waved past the safety car. Debois’ victory margin meant a 41-second penalty for a short pitstop mattered not. The first-ever one-make Praga Cup race was dramatic as woes hit several leading contenders. Victory went to guest all-Pro Arden entry Tom Canning and Alex Connor, with a late safety car putting Connor in position to vault Am drivers ahead. RAW Motorsports’ Ben Stone and Rob Wheldon was the first Praga Cup contender home. Ex-Formula Renault racer Charles Hall did much to ensure

Praga Cup Race 2 victory for him and partner Scott Mittell. Despite starting at the back as Mittell didn’t get a lap in aggregate qualifying after a pushrod breakage, Hall was in first place by Lap 2 then moved well clear in often-greasy conditions. Mittell brought it home. Rhys Lloyd in his Opel Astra got some recompense for his British Endurance Championship race being spoiled by a driveshaft problem by, the following day, dominating the 45-minute Snetterton Saloons race from pole. Matt Robinson won two out of three Superkart races, both after tight battles. Liam Morley, who retired from the lead of Race 1 when a gear stripped, won the other race after a last-lap place-swapping fight with Robinson.

RACE WINNERS		
Britcar Trophy Race 1: Mark Lee/Owen Hizzy – SVG Motorsport (Ginetta G56A) Race 2: Sebastian Debois – Motus One (Ginetta G55A)	Huracan GT3) Praga Cup Race 1: Alex Connor/Tom Canning – Arden by Idola Race 2: Charles Hall/Scott Mittell – Mittell Cars	Races 1 & 3: Matt Robinson (Anderson/Redspeed VM) Race 2: Liam Morley (Anderson/VM) Snetterton Saloons with Z Cars Championship Rhys Lloyd (Open Astra TCR)
British Endurance Championship Lucky Khera/Lee Frost – Race Lab (Lamborghini)	The Super Series by the British Superkart Racing Club	

BRITCAR TROPHY

JUNIOR SENIOR MOVE THEIR FEET

Junior Saloon boss tells Graham Keilloh how he’s taking the matter of youngsters getting senior race opportunities into his own hands

For any driver looking to progress in their career, just how you can make the next step is a perennial – and difficult – question. It’s particularly so for budding teenage talent. Junior Saloon Car Championship boss Dave Beecroft has taken the matter into his own hands, by sharing a Seat Cupra, run by Beecroft’s Orex Competition team, with 18-year-old JSCC racer Harry Rice in Britcar Trophy this season, starting at Silverstone last weekend. Rice won JSCC’s scholarship in 2019 and competed with Orex in JSCC since. “[We] got halfway through the [2021] year and we

couldn’t break out of that midfield group,” Beecroft tells Motorsport News, “so having a chat to his mum and dad I said ‘let’s stop doing this now, let’s save the budget and we’ll go and do the Britcar Trophy the following year’.” “Mum and dad, Terry and Lynda, help us with the hospitality and stuff in the Juniors so all [we’re] one big happy family. We [Beecroft and Rice] get on really well, which helps. It’s [the Britcar venture] just one of those natural things that happens.” For GT World Challenge-aspiring Rice, the Britcar ‘next step’ was especially appreciated. He tried the Seat at Blyton Park in advance. “Since then the car’s had a complete new rollcage, it’s been tuned and changed so much,” Rice tells MN. “Friday was our first actual test in the car in its full-

race spec. Still learning the way it likes to be driven.” It’s certainly a step from JSCC’s Saxo. “It’s got twice the power, a turbo and heavier,” Rice notes. “You have to be careful and gentle.” For Beecroft too it represented something of a driving comeback, having had his own bug re-bitten by competing in Britcar Trophy in late 2020. “I thought ‘before I get any older, I’d better do something’,” he laughs. Their debut weekend aim was to finish, and they did so twice, despite a big delay in Race 2 sorting a brake problem. And Beecroft hopes it’s just the start in another sense too, as from next year he plans to offer opportunities to more JSCC racers. He explains: “We want to expand into Britcar with probably

a three-car team: two Seats in Class 3 and I want to build a Class 1 car for Harry. I’ve just had confirmation from the technical guys that the car I’m thinking about we can use.” Beecroft outlines too that Rice’s gains won’t just be in his driving: “I want to teach him how to develop a car as well. You always learn more on a race weekend, and Harry’s learnt a lot [this weekend]. Next time he drives it he’ll feel all the differences so moving forward in his career he will know what’s needed to make cars better.” Rice concludes: “We’re starting at the bottom and just trying to make our way up. We’re planning to get faster and faster all season and become stronger and stronger as a team. “It’s nice to have someone familiar in the car with you that you trust.” ■



Cupra entry to help youngsters’ on and off track learning



JSCC boss Beecroft and racer Rice became co-drivers

FEATURE

MOTORSPORT NEWS POLL: FAVOURITE WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP MACHINE

We launch a search for the nation’s most beloved stage performers. By Matt James

Photos: Motorsport Images, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

It can be a mission to go and see a rally car in full flight, but the rewards are always worthwhile. Those who have followed Rally GB in all of its guises know what delights await in the forests.

There is something stark about seeing a burst of noise, speed and energy among the greenery. And a well-driven rally car can do nothing but stun the onlookers. We are on a mission to find out which rally cars have left the biggest impression on fans. We have picked out a shortlist of our 10 favourites, which was hard enough in itself and now we will hand the decision over to you. Simply visit the Motorsport News section on the fastcar.co.uk website to make your opinion count and check back with MN on March 31 to see the results.

HOW TO VOTE

- Visit fastcar.co.uk
- Click on 'Motorsport News'
- Find your favourite and vote

THE CONTENDERS

1 Audi Sport quattro/S1

Audi changed the face of rallying by pursuing four-wheel drive. The Group 4 quattro's debut on the 1980 Janner Rally in Austria might not have pointed to it, but the German firm had struck gold. The fearsome Group B era of the World Rally Championship followed, with the Ingolstadt firm introducing the A1 and A2 variants, then the short-wheelbase quattro in 1984. The last version, the S1, came at the end of 1985.



2 Ford Escort Mk2

There is nothing quite like standing in a forest with a Ford Escort Mk2 heading through the gloom with its BDG soundtrack. It is the stuff of rallying legend, and it is the rally car that refuses to die out. When the Mk2 arrived on the scene, it proved a huge hit with its grin-a-minute handling. The Pinto engine was used while the BDE was also employed but it was the 250bhp two-litre BDG that set the pulses racing.



3 Lancia Delta S4

It had twin camshafts. It was supercharged. It was also turbocharged. It was four-wheel drive. It weighed less than 900kgs. The Lancia Delta S4 was a rocket ship. The successor to the 037 was the Italians' attempt to steal the World Rally Championship at the height of the Group B era. The specially designed, F1-inspired engine was created by Abarth for the spaceframed car, which was reported to push out 550bhp.

4 Peugeot 205 T16

The initial work on the Peugeot 205 T16 began at sister firm Talbot's UK base but once the French firm had employed former co-driver Jean Todt to head up the new Peugeot Talbot Sport division, the project was moved to France for its development in the early 1980s. Money was no object for the programme and it went on to become the most successful of all the Group B machines. The 205, in all its evolution versions, won 16 World Rally Championship rounds between 1984 and 1986.



5 Lancia 037

Lancia was keen to embrace the forthcoming Group B era and employed Abarth, Pininfarina and Dallara to help it create one of the best-looking rally machines seen up to that point. However, Lancia hadn't seen the four-wheel-drive writing on the wall and the two-litre car was rear-motivated only. It also suffered from the typical Italian malaise of not being bolted together solidly when it first appeared on the stages in 1982.



6 Lancia Stratos

A Bertone-designed body and a Ferrari V6 made the Lancia Stratos a mouth-watering prospect when it was launched in 1971. The Stratos was already a hit on the tracks when it was homologated for World Rally competition for the 1974 season. The 2.4-litre pocket rocket took a hat-trick of World Championship for Manufacturer titles between 1974 and 1976, when its leading exponent Sandro Munari had no drivers' title to battle for.

7 MG Metro 6R4

The rage in Group B was all about hatchbacks, and the Austin Rover Group converted what was a truly mundane road car into its competition weapon and it employed the skills of the Williams Grand Prix Engineering team to help it. The three-litre V6 bark of the Metro pushed out north of 400bhp. The programme was announced in 1985 and enough models were built in time to be homologated for the RAC Rally during that season. When Group B was outlawed, the momentum went out of the project.



8 Opel Manta 400

Much like the Lancia 037, the Group B version of the Opel Manta was staring down the barrel of the incoming four-wheel-drive revolution with its rear-motivation. However, it put up some valiant performances and a well-driven Manta – famous in the UK for the exploits of Russell Brookes – is a sight to behold. While its World Rally Championship glories were slim pickings, the Manta was a favourite on national events. It claimed two British Open Rally Championship titles with Jimmy McRae in 1984 and Brookes in 1985.



9 Subaru Impreza WRC97

The new World Rally Car class was introduced in 1997 and Subaru was at the leading edge of the curve with its Prodrive machines. The new WRC97 version was Colin McRae's weapon as he aimed to add a second World title to his 1995 success, and he came oh-so close. The Flying Scotsman won five rallies to finish just a single point behind Tommi Makinen's Mitsubishi Lancer. The two-litre turbocharged WRC97 did, however, win the constructors' crown.



10 VW Polo R WRC

The news that VW was returning to the World Rally Championship for the first time in nearly 25 years caused a huge stir in 2013. It had been almost two years in the making before the German giant first rolled its Polo R onto the start ramp in Monte Carlo. First time out, the VW was beaten by Sebastien Loeb and Citroen in the south of France, but VW would go on to bestride the WRC landscape for the next three seasons and, when the German make pulled out at the end of 2016, it had won 43 of the 53 events it had entered.

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE REVIEW

There can be few seasons of motorsport that hit the extremes of light and shade as Formula 1's in 1982, which we give special focus to in this week's Motorsport News. There was extraordinary rancour, controversy and tragedy, but alongside it some of most astonishing track action ever seen, and no fewer than 11 different winners from 16 races.

And, as you might expect, some of this has been captured for posterity by F1's YouTube channel, which let us support our feature's words with moving pictures. The Monaco round with its scarcely credible finish is well catered for. You can watch four-and-a-half minutes' highlights of the whole race, at: youtube.com/

watch?v=4RhOKdaREK0, or search for '1982 Monaco Grand Prix: Race Highlights | DHL F1 Classics'. Or, if you prefer, you can watch the final three laps in full at: youtube.com/watch?v=L3_W0tyg9Dw, or search for: 'Crazy Final Three Laps in Monaco! | 1982 Monaco Grand Prix'. For something equally comedic, there's Nelson Piquet's response

to being taken out of the German race by Eliseo Salazar, at: youtube.com/watch?v=dCPAKVm7-po, or search: 'Piquet Rages After Salazar Shunt | 1982 German Grand Prix'. Meanwhile AP has 26 minutes' intimate footage from the South African season-opener; drivers' strike and all. That's at: youtube.com/watch?v=v54Szh8OzdU.

Graham Keilloh



Relive Monaco GP 1982

TV GUIDE



Gloves will come off again in Bahrain on Sunday

This weekend we have a jam-packed Bahrain gathering that features not only Formula 1's curtain raiser but also those of Formula 2 and Formula 3. Channel 4 has its F1 highlights as usual, with qualifying at 1930hrs-2100hrs on Saturday and the race at 1930hrs-2200hrs on Sunday. Sky Sports F1's preview F1 Show is on Friday at 1700hrs-1800hrs, repeated at 2030hrs-2130hrs. Ted Kravitz is on the scene too with his Sky Sports F1 Notebook broadcasts: the qualifying review is on Saturday at 1735hrs-1805hrs and the race one is on Sunday at 1800hrs-1830hrs. Both also are repeated. Sky Sports F1 also has a new motorsport discussion programme called Any Driven

Monday, which as the name indicates is shown on Monday at 2130hrs-2230hrs. It's also repeated across the subsequent days and indeed you can watch last Monday's inaugural episode today at 1900hrs-2000hrs or 2200hrs-2300hrs. Eurosport 2 meanwhile gets us into the mood for tomorrow's World Endurance Championship Sebring 2022 season opener with highlights action today from last season. At 0800hrs-0900hrs it has Le Mans, immediately followed at 0900hrs-1000hrs by the Bahrain Six Hours. At 1600hrs-1700hrs there's the season-closing Bahrain Eight Hours, followed at 1700hrs-1800hrs by a review of the whole season, which is shown again at 2100hrs-2200hrs.

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 BAHRAIN Drivers' Press Conference: Friday, 0830hrs-1030hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Main Event **Practice 1:** Friday, 1130hrs-1320hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Main Event **Practice 2:** Friday, 1445hrs-1620hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Main Event **Practice 3:** Saturday, 1145hrs-1310hrs, Sky Sports F1 **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1400hrs-1635hrs, Sky Sports F1; 1445hrs-1635hrs, Sky Sports Main Event **Race:** Sunday, 1330hrs-1800hrs (start time 1500hrs), Sky Sports F1; 1430hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports Main Event

Sky Sports F1 **FORMULA 3 BAHRAIN Qualifying:** Friday, 1320hrs-1400hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Main Event **Sprint race:** Saturday, 0955hrs-1055hrs, Sky Sports F1 **Feature race:** Sunday, 0855hrs-0955hrs, Sky Sports F1

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP SEBRING Race: Friday, 1725hrs-0030hrs, Eurosport 1

INDYCAR TEXAS Qualifying: Saturday, 1805hrs-1900hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Mix **Race:** Sunday, 1630hrs-1900hrs, Sky Sports Mix

FORMULA 2 BAHRAIN Qualifying: Friday, 1620hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1, Sky Sports Main Event **Sprint race:** Saturday, 1635hrs-1735hrs, Sky Sports F1 **Feature race:** Sunday, 1035hrs-1150hrs,

NASCAR ATLANTA Race: Sunday, 1830hrs-2300hrs, Premier Sports 2

NASCAR TRUCKS ATLANTA Race: Saturday, 1830hrs-2130hrs, Premier Sports 2

WHAT'S ON

RALLYING SATURDAY Legend Fires North West Stages Motor Sport North West Ltd (spectators admitted) northweststages.co.uk

SUNDAY AG80 Stages (Weston Park) Owen MC (spectators admitted) owenmotoringclub.co.uk

RACING SATURDAY Brands Hatch Indy, Kent MSVR meeting: Equipe GTS, BCV8, Equipe Libre, Pre '63/'50s sports Starts racing from 1220hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission adult £14, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0344 225 4422

Saturday-Sunday Silverstone International, Northants BRSCC meeting: FF1600 Mazda MX-5, Fun Cup, Modified

Ford, Super Saloons/Intermarque, Tin Tops Starts Saturday, racing from 1125hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1040hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission £16 Web silverstone.co.uk Tickets online only

SUNDAY Brands Hatch Indy, Kent MGCC meeting: Metro Cup, Midget/Sprite, MG Trophy, Triple M, MG Cup Starts racing from 1210hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) Admission adult £14, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0344 225 4422

SPORTING SCENE SUNDAY Hednesford Hills Raceway, Cannock National Hot Rods Starts: 1330hrs Admission: adults £20, concessions 65 and over £18, concessions 5-14 years old £8, arena parking £10. Web: spedeworth.co.uk

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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



Gary Hill took a trip to the MSVR Media day and snapped this Jag



Dan Willan, from Graham Lomax



Justin Ward's 2021 GT photograph



Mark Ashby enjoyed Irish RX meet



A Copersucar, from Rich Cranston

NEXT EDITION

OUT THURSDAY, MARCH 24

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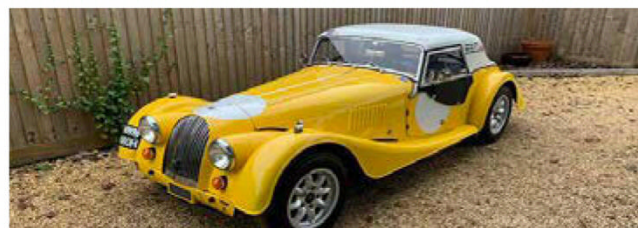
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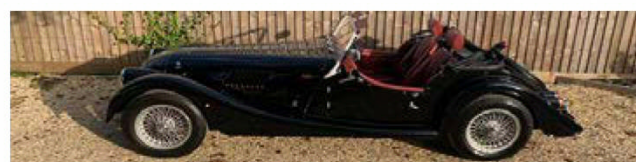
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